Mohd. Manawar ud-Din II year Stud
Essay

A MONTH OF ESSAYS

BEING THIRTY EXAMPLES FROM ENGLISH ESSAYISTS

WITH NOTES

FOR YOUNG INDIAN READERS

BY

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A MONTH OF ESSAYS

I

OF TRAVEL

FRANCIS BACON

Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth; for else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation: let diaries, therefore, be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors: the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns; and so the havens

and harbours, antiquities and ruins, libraries, colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, burses, warehouses, exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like: comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes: cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go; after all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them: yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do: first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth; then he must have such a servant, or tutor, as knoweth the country, as was likewise said: let him carry with him also some card, or book, describing the country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry; let him keep also a diary; let him not stay long in one city or town, more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant of acquaintance; let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth: let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth, that he may use his favour in those things he desireth to see

or know: thus he may abridge his travel with much profit. As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable, is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors; for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many: let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad, that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame; for quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided; they are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words; and let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth; and let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories: and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

II

OF FRIENDSHIP

FRANCIS BACON

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, 'Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god': for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides, the Candian; Numa, the Roman; Empedocles, the Sicilian; and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth: for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, 'Magna civitas, magna solitudo'; because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighbourhoods: but we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also

of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness: for princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favourites, or privadoes, as if it were matter of grace, or conversation; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them 'participes curarum'; for it is that which tieth the knot: and we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have

called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch, for when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting. With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death: for when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream; and it seemeth his favour was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him 'venefica,'—'witch'; as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height, as, when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life: there was no third way, he had made him so great. With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberiuse, in a letter to him, saith 'Hæc pro amicitià nostra non occultavi'; and the whole senate dedicated an altar

to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like, or more, was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus; for he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus, and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also, in a letter to the senate, by these words: 'I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me.' Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan, or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half-piece, except they might have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy, namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true, 'Cor ne edito,'—'eat not the heart.' Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts: but one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will con-

clude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves: for there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchymists used to attribute to their stone for a man's body, that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature: but yet, without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature, for, in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; for friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests, but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts: neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend: but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words: finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, 'That speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put

abroad: whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.' Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best), but even without that a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to ass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation: which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, 'Dry light is ever the best': and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment: which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer: for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business: for the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health, is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive; reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead; observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case; but the best receipt (best I say to work and

best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as St. James saith, they are as men 'that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favour.' As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or, that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or, that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters; or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all; but when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight: and if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better, perhaps, than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it: the other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief, and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and, therefore, may put you in a way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease and kill the patient: but a friend, that is wholly acquainted

with a man's estate, will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience; and therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, 'that a friend is another himself': for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place: but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there, which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them: a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate, or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his

wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person: but to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

hose who are without friends to whom
Can open their hearts and impart griefs
d joys, hopes and fears, Suspicions + Secrets
Cannibals of their own heart. They
ffer the decay of intellect + mental agony.

III

OF AMBITION

FRANCIS BACON

Ambition is like choler, which is an humour that maketh men active, earnest, full of alacrity, and stirring, if it be not stopped. But if it be stopped, and cannot have its way, it becometh adust, and thereby malign and venomous. So ambitious men, if they find the way open for their rising, and still get forward, they are rather busy than dangerous; but if they be checked in their desires, they become secretly discontent, and look upon men and matters with an evil eye, and are best pleased when things go backward; which is the worst property in a servant of a prince or state. Therefore it is good for princes, if they use ambitious men, to handle it so, as they be still progressive, and not retrograde: which, because it cannot be without inconvenience, it is good not to use such natures at all. For if they rise not with their service, they will take order to make their service fall with them. But since we have said it were good not to use men of ambitious natures, except it be upon necessity, it is fit we speak, in what cases they are of necessity. Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious: for the use of their service dispenseth with the rest: and to take a soldier without ambition, is to pull off his spurs. There is also great use of ambitious men, in being screens to princes, in matters of danger and envy: for no man will take that

part, except he be like a seeled dove, that mounts, and mounts, because he cannot see about him. There is use also of ambitious men in pulling down the greatness of any subject that over-tops; as Tiberius used Macro in the pulling down of Sejanus. Since therefore they must be used in such cases, there resteth to speak how they are to be bridled, that they may be less dangerous. There is less danger of them, if they be of mean birth than if they be noble; and if they be rather harsh of nature, than gracious and popular; and if they be rather new raised, that grown cunning and fortified in their greatness. It is counted by some weakness in princes to have favourites; but it is, of all others, the best remedy against ambitious great ones. For when the way of pleasuring and displeasuring lieth by the favourite, it is impossible any other should be over-great. Another means to curb them, is to balance them by others as proud as they. But then there must be some middle counsellors to keep things steady; for without that ballast the ship will roll too much. At the least a prince may animate and inure some meaner persons, to be as it were scourges to ambitious men. As for the having of them obnoxious to ruin, if they be of fearful natures it may do well; but if they be stout and daring, it may precipitate their designs, and prove dangerous. As for the pulling of them down, if the affairs require it, and that it may not be done with safety suddenly, the only way is, the interchange continually of favours and disgraces, whereby they may not know what to expect, and be as it were in a wood. Of ambitions, it is less harmful the ambition to prevail in great things, than that other to appear in every thing; for that breeds confusion and mars business: but yet it is less danger to have an

ambitious man stirring in business, than great in dependencies. He that seeketh to be eminent amongst able men, hath a great task; but that is ever good for the public. But he that plots to be the only figure amongst ciphers, is the decay of a whole age. Honour hath three things in it: the vantage ground to do good; the approach to kings and principal persons; and the raising of a man's own fortunes. He that hath the best of these intentions, when he aspireth, is an honest man: and that prince that can discern of these intentions in another that aspireth, is a wise prince. Generally let princes and states choose such ministers as are more sensible of duty than of rising; and such as love business rather upon conscience, than upon bravery: and let them discern a busy nature from a willing mind.

1. Place of advantage
2. desire eagerly -

IV

OF MYSELF

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

It is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise for him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient for my own contentment that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt than rise up to the estimation of most people. As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persua-

sions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercises out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now (which I confess I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish, but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

IX

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
The unknown are better than ill known.
Rumour can ope the grave:
Acquaintance I would have, but when it depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

X

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's: and pleasures yield
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

XI

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display
Or in clouds hide them—I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace), and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, these characters in me. They were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which with the tree still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse as have never since left ringing there. For I remember when I began to read, and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion), but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there (though my understanding had little to do with all this): and by degrees with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers, so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet as immediately as a child is made

an eunuch. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university, but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars to me, the hyssop. Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses of the world. Now though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant, for that was the state then of the English and French Courts; yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rode safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honourable trust, though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not

abstain from renewing my old schoolboy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect.

> Well then; I now do plainly see,
> This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his Majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it.

> Thou, neither great at court nor in the war,
> Nor at th' exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar;
> Content thyself with the small barren praise,
> Which neglected verse does raise, etc.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on: I cast myself into it *A corps perdu*, without making capitulations or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, 'Take thy ease': I met presently not only with many little encumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course. *Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum.* Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

——*Nec vos, dulcissima mundi*
Nomina, vos Musæ, libertas, otia, libri,
Hortique sylvæque anima remanente relinquam.

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest, and the best,
You Muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.

But this is a very petty ejaculation. Because I have concluded all the other chapters with a copy of verses, I will maintain the humour to the last.

MARTIAL, LIB. 10, EP. 47

Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem, etc.

Since, dearest friend, 'tis your desire to see
A true receipt of happiness from me;
These are the chief ingredients, if not all:
Take an estate neither too great not small,
Which *quantum sufficit* the doctors call;
Let this estate from parents' care descend:
The getting it too much of life does spend.
Take such a ground, whose gratitude may be
A fair encouragement for industry.
Let constant fires the winter's fury tame,
And let thy kitchens be a vestal flame.
Thee to the town let never suit at law,
And rarely, very rarely, business draw.
Thy active mind in equal temper keep,
In undisturbed peace, yet not in sleep.
Let exercise a vigorous health maintain,
Without which all the composition's vain.
In the same weight prudence and innocence take
Ana of each does the just mixture make.
But a few friendships wear, and let them be

By Nature and by Fortune fit for thee.
Instead of art and luxury in food,
Let mirth and freedom make thy table good.
If any cares into thy daytime creep,
At night, without wines, opium, let them sleep.
Let rest, which Nature does to darkness wed,
And not lust, recommend to thee thy bed,
Be satisfied, and pleased with what thou art;
Act cheerfully and well the allotted part.
Enjoy the present hour, be thankful for the past,
And neither fear, nor wish the approaches of the
last.

Martial, Lib. 10, Ep. 96

Me, who have lived so long among the great,
You wonder to hear talk of a retreat:
And a retreat so distant, as may show
No thoughts of a return when once I go.
Give me a country, how remote so e'er,
Where happiness a moderate rate does bear,
Where poverty itself in plenty flows
And all the solid use of riches knows.
The ground about the house maintains it there,
The house maintains the ground about it here.
Here even hunger's dear, and a full board
Devours the vital substance of the lord.
The land itself does there the feast bestow,
The land itself must here to market go.
Three or four suits one winter here does waste,
One suit does there three or four winters last.
Here every frugal man must oft be cold,
And little lukewarm fires are to you sold.
There fire's an element as cheap and free
Almost as any of the other three.

Stay you then here, and live among the great,
Attend their sports, and at their tables eat.
When all the bounties here of men you score:
The Place's bounty there, shall give me more.

V

THE SPECTATOR CLUB

RICHARD STEELE

Ast alii sex

Et plures, uno conclamant ore.—Juv. *Sat.* vii. 167

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho-square. It is said, he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for

calling him youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterward. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wrote it. . . He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed.

His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit, that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the game act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple, a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humorsome father, than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to

marriage-articles, leases, and tenures in the neighbourhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool; but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable: as few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients, makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New-Inn, crosses through Russell-court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will

tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms: for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove, that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favourite is, 'A penny saved is a penny got.' A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms, by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass, but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir of Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament, that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous

a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he had talked to this purpose, I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world, because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty, and an even regular behaviour, are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds, who endeavour at the same end with himself, the favour of a commander. He will, however, in his way of talk excuse generals, for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it; for, says he, that great man who has a mind to help me, has as many to break through to come at me, as I have to come at him: therefore he will conclude, that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candour does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conservation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from a habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humorists, unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have amongst us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who, according to his years, should be in the decline of his life, but

having been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces on his brain. His person is well turned, and of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods ; . . . and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such an occasion, he will tell you, when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court, such a woman was then smitten—another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the Park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance, or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such-a-one. . . This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn ; and I find there is not one of the company, but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of, as one of our company ; for he visits us but seldom ; but when he

does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently, cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to; he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counsellor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind, and the integrity of his life, create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years, that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interest in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

VI

MR. SPECTATOR ON HIMSELF

RICHARD STEELE

Egregii mortalem altique silentii?—Hor. 2 *Sat.* vi. 58.

An author when he first appears in the world, is very apt to believe it has nothing to think of but his performances. With a good share of this vanity in my heart, I made it my business these three days to listen after my own fame; and as I have sometimes met with circumstances which did not displease me, I have been encountered by others which gave me much mortification. It is incredible to think how empty I have in this time observed some part of the species to be, what mere blanks they are when they first come abroad in the morning, how utterly they are at a stand until they are set a-going by some paragraph in a newspaper.

Such persons are very acceptable to a young author, for they desire no more in any thing but to be new, to be agreeable. If I found consolation among such, I was as much disquieted by the incapacity of others. These are mortals who have a certain curiosity without power of reflection, and perused my papers like spectators rather than readers. But there is so little pleasure in inquiries that so nearly concern ourselves (it being the worst way in the world to fame, to be too anxious about it) that upon the whole I resolved for the future to go on in my ordinary way; and without too much fear

or hope about the business of reputation, to be very careful of the design of my actions, but very negligent of the consequences of them.

It is an endless and frivolous pursuit to act by any other rule, than the care of satisfying our own minds in what we do. One would think a silent man, who concerned himself with no one breathing, should be very little liable to misrepresentations; and yet I remember I was once taken up for a Jesuit, for no other reason but my profound taciturnity. It is from this misfortune, that, to be out of harm's way, I have ever since affected crowds. He who comes into assemblies only to gratify his curiosity, and not to make a figure, enjoys the pleasures of retirement in a more exquisite degree than he possibly could in his closet: the lover, the ambitious, and the miser, are followed thither by a worse crowd than any they can withdraw from. To be exempt from the passions with which others are tormented, is the only pleasing solitude. I can very justly say with the sage, "I am never less alone than when alone."

As I am insignificant to the company in public places, and as it is visible I do not come thither as most do, to show myself, I gratify the vanity of all who pretend to make an appearance, and have often as kind looks from well-dressed gentlemen and ladies, as a poet would bestow upon one of his audience. There are so many gratifications attend this public sort of obscurity, that some little distastes I daily receive have lost their anguish; and I did, the other day, without the least displeasure, overhear one say of me, "that strange fellow;" and another answer, "I have known the fellow's face these twelve years, and so must you; but I believe

you are the first ever asked who he was." There are, I must confess, many to whom my person is as well known as that of their nearest relations, who give themselves no further trouble about calling me by my name or quality, but speak of me very currently by Mr. What-d'ye-call-him.

To make up for these trivial disadvantages, I have the highest satisfaction of beholding all nature with an unprejudiced eye; and having nothing to do with men's passions or interests, I can, with the greater sagacity, consider their talents, manners, failings, and merits.

It is remarkable, that those who want any one sense, possess the others with greater force and vivacity. Thus my want of, or rather resignation of speech, gives me the advantages of a dumb man. I have, methinks, a more than ordinary penetration in seeing; and flatter myself that I have looked into the highest and lowest of mankind, and made shrewd guesses, without being admitted to their conversation, at the inmost thoughts and reflections of all whom I behold. It is from hence that good or ill fortune has no manner of force towards affecting my judgment. I see men flourishing in courts, and languishing in jails, without being prejudiced from their circumstances, to their favour or disadvantage; but from their inward manner of bearing their condition, often pity the prosperous, and admire the unhappy.

Those who converse with the dumb, know from the turn of their eyes, and the changes of their countenance, their sentiments of the objects before them. I have indulged my silence to such an extravagance, that the few who are intimate with me answer my smiles with concurrent sentences, and

argue to the very point I shaked my head at, without my speaking. Will Honeycomb was very entertaining the other night at a play, to a gentleman who sat on his right hand, while I was at his left. The gentleman believed Will was talking to himself, when upon my looking with great approbation at a young thing in a box before us, he said, "I am quite of another opinion. She has, I will allow, a very pleasing aspect, but, methinks, that simplicity in her countenance is rather childish than innocent." When I observed her a second time, he said, "I grant her dress is very becoming, but perhaps the merit of that choice is owing to her mother; for though," continued he, "I allow a beauty to be as much to be commended for the elegance of her dress, as a wit for that of his language, yet if she has stolen the colour of her ribands from another, or had advice about her trimmings, I shall not allow her the praise of dress, any more than I would call a plagiary an author." When I threw my eye towards the next woman to her, Will spoke what I looked, according to his romantic imagination, in the following manner:

"Behold, you who dare, that charming virgin; behold the beauty of her person chastised by the innocence of her thoughts. Chastity, good-nature, and affability, are the graces that play in her countenance: she knows she is handsome, but she knows she is good. Conscious beauty adorned with conscious virtue! What a spirit is there in those eyes! What a bloom in that person! How is the whole woman expressed in her appearance! Her air has the beauty of motion, and her look the force of language."

It was prudence to turn away my eyes from this

object, and therefore I turned them to the thoughtless creatures who make up the lump of that sex, and move a knowing eye no more than the portraitures of insignificant people by ordinary painters, which are but pictures of pictures.

Thus the working of my own mind is the general entertainment of my life: I never enter into the commerce of discourse with any but my particular friends, and not in public even with them. Such a habit has perhaps raised in me uncommon reflections; but this effect I cannot communicate but by my writings. As my pleasures are almost wholly confined to those of the sight, I take it for a peculiar happiness that I have always had an easy and familiar admittance to the fair sex. If I never praised or flattered, I never belied or contradicted them. As these compose half the world, and are, by the just complaisance and gallantry of our nation, the more powerful part of our people, I shall dedicate a considerable share of these my speculations to their services, and shall lead the young through all the becoming duties of virginity, marriage, and widowhood. When it is a woman's day, in my works, I shall endeavour at a style and air suitable to their understanding. When I say this, I must be understood to mean, that I shall not lower but exalt the subjects I treat upon. Discourse for their entertainment is not to be debased, but refined. A man may appear learned without talking sentences, as in his ordinary gesture he discovers he can dance, though he does not cut capers. In a word, I shall take for the greatest glory of my work, if among reasonable women this paper may furnish tea-table talk. In order to it, I shall treat on matters which relate to females, as they are concerned to approach

or fly from the other sex, or as they are tied to them by blood, interest, or affection. Upon this occasion I think it but reasonable to declare, that whatever skill I may have in speculation, I shall never betray what the eyes of lovers say to each other in my presence. At the same time I shall not think myself obliged by this promise to conceal any false protestations which I observe made by glances in public assemblies, but endeavour to make both sexes appear in their conduct what they are in their hearts. By this means, love, during the time of my speculations, shall be carried on with the same sincerity as any other affair of less consideration. As this is the greatest concern, men shall be from henceforth liable to the greatest reproach for misbehaviour in it. Falsehood in love shall hereafter bear a blacker aspect than infidelity in friendship, or villainy in business. For this great and good end, all breaches against that noble passion, the cement of society, shall be severely examined. But this, and all other matters loosely hinted at now, and in my former papers, shall have their proper place in my following discourses. The present writing is only to admonish the world, that they shall not find me an idle but a busy Spectator.

VII

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY AT HOME

JOSEPH ADDISON

Hic tibi copia
Manabit ad plenum, benigno
Ruris honorum opulenta cornu.

Hor. *Od.* i. 17.

Having often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please; dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance: as I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over a hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons: for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take

his valet-de-chambre for his brother, his butler is grey-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a grey pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenance of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very

venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation; he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humorist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common or ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned; and, without staying for my answer, told me that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper: and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. 'My friend,' says Sir Roger, 'found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar though he does not show it: I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher

in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has lived among them; if any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity.'

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow (for it was Saturday night) told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think

I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

VIII

SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

JOSEPH ADDISON

I am always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilising of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon the Change, the whole parish politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion table at his own expense. He has often told me,

that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer book: and at the same time employed an itinerant singing master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself: for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circum-

stances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see anything ridiculous in his behaviour; besides that the general good sense and worthiness of his character makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side; and every now and then inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechising day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a bible to be given him next day for his encouragement: and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church service, has promised, upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the 'squire, and the 'squire to be revenged on the parson never comes to church. The 'squire has made all his tenants atheists, and

tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity, that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning: and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

IX

SIR ROGER AT THE ASSIZES

JOSEPH ADDISON

Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est.

PUB. SYR. *Frag.*

A man's first care should be to avoid the reproaches of his own heart; his next, to escape the censures of the world; if the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind, than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public: a man is more sure of his conduct, when the verdict which he passes upon his own behaviour is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind, in the returns of affection and good-will, which are paid him by every one that lives within his neighbourhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will Wimble and myself with him to the country assizes: as we were upon the road Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rode before us, and conversed with them for some time; during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

'The first of them,' says he, 'that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about an hundred pounds a year, an honest man: he is just within the game act, and qualified to kill an hare or a pheasant; he knocks down dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week: and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbour if he did not destroy so many patridges; in short he is a very sensible man; shoots flying; and has been several times foreman of the petty jury.

'The other that rides along with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for taking the law of every body. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter-sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejectments; he plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it enclosed to defray the charges of the prosecution: his father left him four-score pounds a year; but he has cast and been cast so often, that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow tree.'

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom Touchy, Will Wimble and his two companions stopped short until we came up to them. After having paid their respects to Sir Roger, Will told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will it seems had been giving his fellow-traveller an account of his angling one day in such a hole; when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him, that Mr. such an one, if he pleased, might

take the law of him for fishing in that part of the river. My friend Sir Roger heard them both upon a round trot; and after having paused some time, told them, with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that *much might be said on both sides.* They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself in the wrong by it; upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was sat before Sir Roger came; but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear, *that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit.* I was listening to the proceedings of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance and solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed to my great surprise, in the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him till I found he had acquitted himself of two or three sentences, with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people that Sir Roger *was up.* The speech he made was so little to the purpose, that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to

see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend, and striving who should compliment him most; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage, that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident; which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family; and to do honour to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door; so that 'the Knight's Head' had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and good-will, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honour for any man under a duke; but told him at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly, they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and by a little aggravation of the features to change it into the *Saracen's Head*. I should not have known this story, had not the inn-keeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing, that his honour's head was brought back last night with

the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend with his usual cheerfulness related the particulars above mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room. I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance of my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence: but upon the knight conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance in the best manner I could, and replied, *That much might be said on both sides.*

These several adventures, with the knight's behaviour in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels.

X

SIR ROGER AT THE THEATRE

JOSEPH ADDISON

Respicere exemplar vitae morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.

HOR. *Ars Poet* 317.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy with me, assuring me at the same time, that he had not been at a play these twenty years. 'The last I saw', said Sir Roger, 'was *The Committee*, which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church of England comedy. He then proceeded to inquire of me who this *Distressed Mother* was; and upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a school-boy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks should be abroad. 'I assure you,' says he, 'I thought I had fallen into their hands last night: for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half way up Fleet Street, and mended their pace behind me in proportion as I put on to get away from them. 'You must know,' continued the knight, with a smile, 'I fancied they had a mind to *hunt* me; for I remember an honest

gentleman in my neighbourhood, who was served such a trick in King Charles II's time, for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design; for as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged, and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before.' Sir Roger added that if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it; 'for I threw them out,' says he, 'at the end of Norfolk Street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me.' 'However,' says the knight, 'if Captain Sentry will make one with us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call upon me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you, for John tells me he has got the fore-wheels mended.'

The Captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bade Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he made use of at the battle of Steenkirk. Sir Roger's servants and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good oaken plants, to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the Captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we conveyed him in safety to the play-house, where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the Captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full, and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up and looked about him with that pleasure,

which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself, at the sight of a multitude of people who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism; and was well pleased to hear him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache, and a little while after as much for Hermione: and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, 'You can't imagine, Sir, what it is to have to do with a widow.' Upon Pyrrhus his threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head and muttered to himself, 'Ay, do if you can.' This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered in my ear, 'These widows, Sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world.' 'But pray,' says he, 'you that are a critic, is this play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood?

Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of.'

The fourth act very unluckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer: 'Well,' says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, 'I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost.' He then renewed his attention, and, from time to time, fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom at his first entering he took for Astyanax: but he quickly set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, 'Who,' said he, 'must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given of him.' Upon Harmione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap; to which Sir Roger added, 'On my word, a notable young baggage!'

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts, to express their opinion of the players and of their respective parts. Sir Roger hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man; as they were afterwards applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time, 'And let me tell you,' says he, 'though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them.' Captain Sentry seeing two or three wags who sat near us, lean with an attentive ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear, that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The

knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus his death, and at the conclusion of it told me, it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralise (in his way) upon an evil conscience, adding, that Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something.

As we were the first that came into the house, so we were the last that went out of it ; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the justling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertaiment, and we guarded him to his lodgings in the same manner that we brought him to the play-house ; being highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man.

XI

DICK MINIM THE CRITIC

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Criticism is a study by which men grow important and formidable at a very small expense. The power of invention has been conferred by nature upon few, and the labour of learning those sciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others: and he whom nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a Critic.

I hope it will give comfort to great numbers who are passing through the world in obscurity, when I inform them how easily distinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they must be long courted, and at last are not always gained; but Criticism is a goddess easy of access and forward of advance, who will meet the slow, and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning she supplies with words, and the want of spirit she recompenses with malignity.

This profession has one recommendation peculiar to itself, that it gives vent to malignity without real mischief. No genius was ever blasted by the breath of critics. The poison which, if confined, would have burst the heart, fumes away in empty hisses, and malice is set at ease with very little danger to merit. The Critic is the only man whose

triumph is without another's pain, and whose greatness does not rise upon another's ruin.

To a study at once so easy and so reputable, so malicious and so harmless, it cannot be necessary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is sufficient, since all would be Critics if they could, to show by one eminent example that all can be Critics if they will.

Dick Minim, after the common course of puerile studies, in which he was no great proficient, was put apprentice to a brewer, with whom he had lived two years, when his uncle died in the city, and left him a large fortune in the stocks. Dick had for six months before used the company of the lower players, of whom he had learned to scorn a trade, and, being now at liberty to follow his genius, he resolved to be a man of wit and humour. That he might be properly initiated in his new character, he frequented the coffee-houses near the theatres, where he listened very diligently, day after day, to those who talked of language and sentiments, and unities and catastrophes, till, by slow degrees, he began to think that he understood something of the stage, and hoped in time to talk himself.

But he did not trust so much to natural sagacity as wholly to neglect the help of books. When the theatres were shut, he retired to Richmond with a few select writers, whose opinions he impressed upon his memory by unwearied diligence; and, when he returned with other wits to the town, was able to tell, in very proper phrases, that the chief business of art is to copy nature; that a perfect writer is not to be expected, because genius decays as judgment increases; that the great art is the art of

blotting: and that, according to the rule of Horace, every piece should be kept nine years.

Of the great authors he now began to display the characters, laying down as an universal position, that all had beauties and defects. His opinion was, that Shakespeare, committing himself wholly to the impulse of nature, wanted that correctness which learning would have given him; and that Johnson, trusting to learning, did not sufficiently cast his eyes on nature. He blamed the stanzas of Spenser, and could not bear the hexameters of Sidney. Denham and Waller he held the first reformers of English numbers: and thought that if Waller could have obtained the strength of Denham, or Denham the sweetness of Waller, there had been nothing wanting to complete a poet. He often expressed his commiseration of Dryden's poverty, and his indignation at the age which suffered him to write for bread; he repeated with rapture the first lines of All for Love, but wondered at the corruption of taste which could bear anything so unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In Otway he found uncommon powers of moving the passions, but was disgusted by his general negligence, and blamed him for making a conspirator his hero; and never concluded his disquisition, without remarking how happily the sound of the clock is made to alarm the audience. Southern would have been his favourite, but that he mixes comic with tragic scenes, intercepts the natural course of the passions, and fills the mind with a wild confusion of mirth and melancholy. The versification of Rowe he thought too melodious for the stage, and too little varied in different passions. He made it the great fault of Congreve, that all his persons were wits, and that he always wrote with more art than nature.

He considered Cato rather as a poem than play, and allowed Addison to be the complete master of allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a critic. He thought the chief merit of Prior ws in his easy tales and lighter poems, though he allowed that his *Solomon* had many noble sentiments elegantly expressed. In Swift he discovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an easiness which all would hope and few would attain. Pope he was inclined to degrade from a poet to a versifier, and thought his numbers rather luscious than sweet. He often lamented the neglect of Phædra and Hippolitus, and wished to see the stage under better regulations.

These assertions passed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent started up, he was quickly repressed by the suffrages of the company, and Minim went away from every dispute with elation of heart and increase of confidence.

He now grew conscious of his abilities, and began to talk of the present state of dramatic poetry; wondered what had become of the comic genius which supplied our ancestors with wit and pleasantry, and why no writer could be found that durst now venture beyond a farce. He saw no reason for thinking that the vein of humour was exhausted, since we live in a country where liberty suffers every character to spread itself to its utmost bulk, and which therefore produces more originals than all the rest of the world together. Of tragedy he concluded business to be the soul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern stage.

He was now an acknowledged critic, and had his own seat in a coffee-house, and headed a party in the pit. Minim has more vanity than ill-nature, and

seldom desires to do much mischief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that sits next him, but endeavours to influence the audience to favour, by clapping when an actor exclaims, 'Ye gods!' or laments the misery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to rehearsals; and many of his friends are of opinion, that our present poets are indebted to him for their happiest thoughts: by his contrivance the bell was wrung twice in *Barbarossa*, and by his persuasion the author of *Cleone* concluded his play without a couplet; for what can be more absurd, said Minim, than that part of a play should be rhymed, and part written in blank verse? and by what acquisition of faculties is the speaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the conclusion of an act?

He is the great investigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds 'the sound an echo to the sense.' He has read all our poets with particular attention to this delicacy of versification, and wonders at the supineness with which their works have been hitherto perused, so that no man has found the sound of a drum in this distich:

> When pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
> Was beat with fist instead of a stick;

and that the wonderful lines upon honour and a bubble have hitherto passed without notice:

> Honour is like the glassy bubble,
> Which cost philosophers such trouble;
> Where, one part crack'd, the whole does fly,
> And wits are crack'd to find out why.

In these verses, says Minim, we have two striking accommodations of the sound to the sense. It

is impossible to utter the first two lines emphatically without an act like that which they describe; *bubble* and *trouble* causing a momentary inflation of the cheeks by the retention of the breath, which is afterwards forcibly emitted, as in the practice of *blowing bubbles*. But the greatest excellence is in the third line, which is *crack'd* in the middle to express a crack, and then shivers into monosyllables. Yet has this diamond lain neglected with common stones, and among the innumerable admirers of Hudibras, the observation of this superlative passage has been reserved for the sagacity of *Minim*.

DICK MINIM THE CRITIC—(continued)

Mr. Minim had now advanced himself to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the pit, every eye in the boxes was fixed upon him: when he entered his coffee-house, he was surrounded by circles of candidates, who passed their noviciate of literature under his tuition: his opinion was asked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no composition was supposed to pass in safety to posterity, till it had been secured by Minim's approbation.

Minim professes great admiration of the wisdom and munificence by which the academies of the continent were raised: and often wishes for some standard of taste, for some tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an academy of criticism, where every work of imagination may be read before it is printed, and which shall authoritatively direct the theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

Such an institution would, in Dick's opinion, spread the fame of English literature over Europe, and make London the metropolis of elegance and politeness, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for instruction and improvement, and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed to the nicest rules, and finished with the highest elegance.

Till some happy conjunction of the planets shall dispose our princes or ministers to make themselves immortal by such an academy, Minim contents himself to preside four nights in a week in a critical society selected by himself, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is disseminated through the great vulgar and the small.

When he is placed in the chair of criticism, he declares loudly for the noble simplicity of our ancestors, in opposition to the petty refinements and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is sunk in despair, and perceives false delicacy daily gaining ground, and sometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true sublime. He then fulminates his loudest censures against the monkish barbarity of rhyme ; wonders how beings that pretend to reason can be pleased with one line always ending like another ; tells how unjustly and unnaturally sense is sacrificed to sound ; how often the best thoughts are mangled by the necessity of confining or extending them to the dimensions of a couplet ; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, shaken off the shackles which had encumbered it so long. Yet he allows that rhyme may sometimes be borne, if the lines be often broken, and the pauses judiciously diversified.

From blank verse he makes an easy transition to Milton, whom he produces as an example of the slow advance of lasting reputation. Milton is the only writer in whose books Minim can read for ever without weariness. What cause it is that exempts this pleasure from satiety he has long and diligently inquired, and believes it to consist in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and unmusical, he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the rest, or to express things by a proper cadence: for he scarcely finds a verse that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could shiver in a hot-house when he reads that

> the ground
> Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire;

and that, when Milton bewails his blindness, the verse,

> So thick a drop serene has quenched these orbs,

has, he knows not how, something that strikes his with an obscure sensation like that which he fancies would be felt from the sound of darkness.

Minim is not so confident of his rules of judgment as not very eagerly to catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly so prudent as to spare those whom he cannot resist, unless, as will sometimes happen, he finds the public combined against them. But a fresh pretender to fame he is strongly inclined to censure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the success of a composition, he entrenches himself in general terms; there are some new thoughts and

beautiful passages, but there is likewise much which he would have advised the author to expunge. He has several favourite epithets, of which he never settled the meaning, but which are very commodiously applied to books which he has not read, or cannot understand. One is *manly*, another is *dry*, another *stiff*, and another *flimsy*; sometimes he discovers delicacy of style, and sometimes meets with *strange expressions*.

He is never so great, nor so happy, as when a youth of promising parts is brought to receive his directions for the prosecution of his studies. He then puts on a very serious air; he advises the pupil to read none but the best authors, and, when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to study his beauties, but avoid his faults: and, when he sits down to write, to consider how his favourite author would think at the present time on the present occasion. He exhorts him to catch those moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care lest imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of nature. He holds diligence the mother of success; yet enjoins him, with great earnestness, not to read more than he can digest, and not to confuse his mind by pursuing studies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that Cicero could never be a poet. The boy retires illuminated, resolves to follow his genius, and to think how Milton would have thought: and Minim feasts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another pupil.

XII

THE ADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN A GARRET

SAMUEL JOHNSON

To the Rambler.

Sir,

Nothing has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope ; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter, from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silkworm's thread ; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means

of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect: or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated situation: why else were the *Muses* stationed on *Olympus* or *Parnassus* by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of *Tempe*, or erected their altars among the flexures of *Meander*? Why was *Jove* himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of *Ida*? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of *Pythagoras*, ἀνέμων πνεόντων τὴν ἠχὼ προσκύνει, 'when the wind blows, worship its echo.' This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which

I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition ~~wholely~~ obliterated in the age of *Augustus*, for *Tribullus* evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the *Pythagorean* precept.

> Quam iuvat immites ventos audire cubantem
> Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster,
> Securum somnos imbre iuvante sequi!
> How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,
> Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing show'rs!

And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of *Lucretius*, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him.

> Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
> Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
> Despicere unde queas alios passimque videre
> Errare atque viam palantis quaerere vitae.
> —'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
> To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd
> And all the magazines of learning fortify'd:
> From thence to look below on human kind,
> Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.
>
> DRYDEN.

The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established.

Causa latet; res est notissima.
The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.

ADDISON.

Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits, as most easily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aerial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is to enlarge his knowledge and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements; and some, yet more visionary, tell us, that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well-chosen garret; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of a universal practice, there must still be presumed a universal cause, which however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps

reserved to make me illustrious by its discovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is universally known that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is in a great measure regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of *Hippocrates*; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dullness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground, as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

For this reason I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various

degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects; according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known: every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth storey is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must acuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.

If you imagaine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had

placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding, till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue block-heads even on the summit of the *Andes*, or on the peak of *Teneriffe*. But let not any man be considered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of *Aretaeus* was rational in no other place but his own shop.

I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which *Bacon* describes in *Solomon's* house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

Addison observes that we may find the heat of *Virgil's* climate, in some lines of his *Georgic*: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly said to smell of

the laimp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprghtly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret ; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

XIII

AT THE PLAY

GOLDSMITH

The English are as fond of seeing plays acted as the Chinese; but there is a vast difference in the manner of conducting them. We play our pieces in the open air, the English theirs under cover; we act by daylight, they by the blaze of torches. One of our plays continues eight or ten days successively; an English piece seldom takes up above four hours in the representation.

My companion in black, with whom I am now beginning to contract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-house, where we placed ourselves conveniently at the foot of the stage. As the curtain was not drawn before my arrival, I had an opportunity of observing the behaviour of the spectators, and indulging those reflections which novelty generally inspires.

The rich in general were placed in the lowest seats, and the poor rose above them in degrees proportioned to their poverty. The order of precedence seemed here inverted; those who were undermost all the day, now enjoyed a temporary eminence, and became masters of the ceremonies. It was they who called for the music, indulging every noisy freedom, and testifying all the insolence of beggary in exaltation.

They who held the middle region seemed not so riotous as those above them, nor yet so tame as

those below; to judge by their looks, many of them seemed strangers there as well as myself. They were chiefly employed during this period of expectation in eating oranges, reading the story of the play, or making assignations.

Those who sat in the lowest rows, which are called the pit, seemed to consider themselves as judges of the merits of the poet and the performers; they were assembled partly to be amused, and partly to show their taste; appearing to labour under that restraint which an affectation of superior discernment generally produces. My companion, however, informed me that not one in an hundred of them knew even the first principles of criticism; that they assumed the right of being censors because there was none to contradict their pretensions; and that every man who now called himself a connoisseur, became such to all intents and purposes.

Those who sat in the boxes appeared in the most unhappy situation of all. The rest of the audience came merely for their own amusement; these rather to furnish out a part of the entertainment themselves. I could not avoid considering them as acting parts in dumb show—not a curtsy or nod that was not the result of art; not a look nor a smile that was not designed for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other through spectacles; for my companion observed, that blindness was of late become fashionable; all affected indifference and ease, while their hearts at the same time burned for conquest. Upon the whole, the lights, the music, the ladies in their gayest dresses, the men with cheerfulness and expectation in their looks, all conspired to make a most agreeable picture, and to fill an heart that sympa-

thises at human happiness with an inexpressible serenity.

The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived, the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in curtsying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England: the manner is absurd; but every country, you know, has its peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen, as at the little discernment of the audience who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress, for it seems the queen had lost a child some fifteen years before, and still keeps its dear resemblance next to her heart, while her kind companion bore a part in her sorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud. Comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound. She bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who seeing the queen so much afflicted, can himself hardly refrain from tears or avoid partaking in the soft distress. And thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropped for the first act.

Truly, said I to my companion, these kings and queens are very much disturbed at no very great misfortune; certain I am, were people of humbler stations to act in this manner, they would be thought divested of common sense. I had scarce finished this observation, when the curtain rose, and the king

came on in a violent passion. His wife had, it seems, refused his proffered tenderness, had spurned his royal embrace; and he seemed resolved not to survive her fierce disdain. After he had thus fretted, and the queen had fretted through the second act, the curtain was let down once more.

Now, says my companion, you perceive the king to be a man of spirit, he feels at every pore; one of your phlegmatic sons of clay would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herself by degrees; but the king is for immediate tenderness, or instant death: death and tenderness are leading passions of every modern buskined hero; this moment they embrace, and the next stab, mixing daggers and kisses in every period.

I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object; a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. To what purpose, cried I, does this unmeaning figure make his appearance; is he a part of the plot? Unmeaning do you call him? replied my friend in black; this is one of the most important characters of the whole play: nothing pleases the people more than the seeing a straw balanced; there is a great deal of meaning in the straw; there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight; and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune.

The third act now began with an actor who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to show strange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who seemed as much disposed for mischief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole division. If that be a

villain, said I, he must be a very stupid one, to tell his secrets without being asked ; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China.

The noise of clapping interrupted me once more ; a child of six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarins infinite satisfaction. I am sorry, said I, to see the pretty creatures so early learning so very bad a trade; dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as in China. Quite the reverse, interrupted my companion ; dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here ; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a year ; he who flourishes them four times, get four hundred ; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers too are valued for this sort of jumping and crossing ; and 'tis a cant word among them, that she deserves most who shows highest. But the fourth act is begun, let us be attentive.

In the fourth act the queen finds her long-lost child, now grown up into a youth of smart parts and great qualifications ; wherefore she wisely considers that the crown will fit his head better than that of her husband, whom she knows to be a driveller. The king discovers her design, and here comes on the deep distress ; he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom ; he resolves, therefore, in order to possess both, that her son must die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity ; is frantic with rage, and at length, overcome with sorrow, falls into a fit ;

upon which the curtain drops, and the act is concluded.

"Observe the art of the poet," cries my companion; "when the queen can say no more, she falls into a fit. While thus her eyes are shut, while she is supported in the arms of Abigail, what horrors do we not fancy, we feel it in every nerve; take my word for it, that fits are the true aposiopesis of modern tragedy."

The fifth act began, and a busy piece it was. Scenes shifting, trumpets sounding, mobs hallooing, carpets spreading, guards bustling from one door to another; gods, daemons, daggers, racks and ratsbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen was drowned, or the son was poisoned, I have absolutely forgotten.

When the play was over, I could not avoid observing, that the persons of the drama appeared in as much distress in the first act as the last: How is it possible, said I, to sympathize with them through five long acts; pity is but a short-lived passion; I hate to hear an actor mouthing trifles; neither startings, strainings, nor attitudes affect me unless there be cause: after I have been once or twice deceived by those unmeaning alarms, my heart sleeps in peace, probably unaffected by the principal distress. There should be one great passion aimed at by the actor as well as the poet, all the rest should be subordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the actor therefore exclaims upon every occasion in the tones of despair, he attempts to move us too soon; he anticipates the blow, he ceases to affect though he gains our applause.

I scarce perceived that the audience were almost

all departed; wherefore mixing with the crowd, my companion and I got into the street; where essaying an hundred obstacles from coach-wheels and palanquin poles like birds in their flight through the branches of a forest, after various turnings, we both at length got home in safety.

XIV

ON NATIONAL PREJUDICES

GOLDSMITH

As I am one of that sauntering tribe of mortals who spend the greatest part of their time in taverns, coffee-houses, and other places of public resort, I have thereby an opportunity of observing an infinite variety of characters, which to a person of a contemplative turn is a much higher entertainment than a view of all the curiosities of art or nature. In one of these my late rambles I accidentally fell into a company of half a dozen gentlemen, who were engaged in a warm dispute about some political affair, the decision of which, as they were equally divided in their sentiments, they thought proper to refer to me, which naturally drew me in for a share of the conversation.

Amongst a multiplicity of other topics, we took occasion to talk of the different characters of the several nations of Europe; when one of the gentlemen, cocking his hat, and assuming such an air of importance as if he had possessed all the merit of the English nation in his own person, declared, that the Dutch were a parcel of avaricious wretches; the French a set of flattering sycophants; that the Germans were drunken sots, and beastly gluttons; and the Spaniards proud, haughty, and surly tyrants; but that in bravery, generosity, clemency, and in every other virtue, the English excelled all the world.

This very learned and judicious remark was re-

ceived with a general smile of approbation by all the company—all, I mean, but your humble servant, who, endeavouring to keep my gravity as well as I could, and reclining my head upon my arm, continued for some time in a posture of affected thoughtfulness, as if I had been musing on something else, and did not seem to attend to the subject of conversation; hoping by this means to avoid the disagreeable necessity of explaining myself, and thereby depriving the gentleman of his imaginary happiness.

But my pseudo-patriot had no mind to let me escape so easily. Not satisfied that his opinion should pass without contradiction, he was determined to have it ratified by the suffrage of every one in the company; for which purpose, addressing himself to me with an air of inexpressible confidence, he asked me if I was not of the same way of thinking. As I am never forward in giving my opinion, especially when I have reason to believe that it will not be agreeable; so, when I am obliged to give it, I always hold it for a maxim to speak my real sentiments. I therefore told him that, for my own part, I should not have ventured to talk in such a peremptory strain unless I had made the tour of Europe, and examind the manners of these several nations with great care and accuracy: that perhaps a more impartial judge would not scruple to affirm, that the Dutch were more frugal and industrious, the French more temperate and polite, the Germans more hardy and patient of labour and fatigue, and the Spaniards more staid and sedate, than the English; who, though undoubtedly brave and generous, were at the same time rash, headstrong, and impetuous; too apt to be elated with prosperity, and to despond in adversity.

1. Confirmed depressed in the

I could easily perceive, that all the company began to regard me with a jealous eye before I had finished my answer, which I had no sooner done, than the patriotic gentleman observed, with a contemptuous sneer, that he was greatly surprised how some people could have the conscience to live in a country which they did not love, and to enjoy the protection of a government to which in their hearts they were inveterate enemies. Finding that by this modest declaration of my sentiments I had forfeited the good opinion of my companions, and given them occasion to call my political principles in question, and well knowing that it was in vain to argue with men who were so very full of themselves, I threw down my reckoning and retired to my own lodgings, reflecting on the absurd and ridiculous nature of national prejudice and prepossession.

Among all the famous sayings of antiquity, there is none that does greater honour to the author, or affords greater pleasure to the reader, (at least if he be a person of a generous and benevolent heart,) than that of the philosopher who, being asked what countryman he was, replied, that he was "a citizen of the world." How few are there to be found in modern times who can say the same, or whose conduct is consistent with such a profession! We are now become so much Englishmen, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Spaniards, or Germans, that we are no longer citizens of the world; so much the natives of one particular spot, or members of one petty society, that we no longer consider ourselves as the general inhabitants of the globe, or members of that grand society which comprehends the whole human kind.

Did these prejudices prevail only among the meanest and lowest of the people, perhaps they

might be excused, as they have few, if any, opportunities of correcting them by reading, travelling, or conversing with foreigners: but the misfortune is, that they infect the minds, and influence the conduct, even of our gentlemen; of those, I mean, who have every title to this appellation but an exemption from prejudice, which, however, in my opinion, ought to eb regarded as the characteristical mark of a gentleman; for let a man's birth be ever so high, his station ever so exalted, or his fortune ever so large, yet if he is not free from national and other prejudices, I should make bold to tell him, that he had a low and vulgar mind, and had no just claim to the character of a gentleman. And, in fact, you will always find that those are most apt to boast of national merit, who have little or no merit of their own to depend on; than which, to be sure, nothing is more natural: the slender vine twists around the sturdy oak, for no other reason in the world but because it has not strength sufficient to support itself.

Should it be alleged in defence of national prejudice, that it is the natural and necessary growth of love to our country, and that therefore the former cannot be destroyed without hurting the latter, I answer that this is a gross fallacy and delusion. That it is the growth of love to our country, I will allow; but that it is the natural and necessary growth of it, I absolutely deny Superstition and enthusiasm, too, are the growth of religion; but who ever took it in his head to affirm, that they are the necessary growth of this noble principle? They are, if you will, the bastard sprouts of this heavenly plant, but not its natural and genuine branches, and may safely enough be lopped off, without doing any harm to the parent stock: nay, perhaps, till once they are lopped off,

this goodly tree can never flourish in perfect health and vigour.

Is it not very possible that I may love my own country, without hating the natives of other countries? that I may exert the most heroic bravery, the most undaunted resolution, in defending its laws and liberty, without despising all the rest of the world as cowards and poltroons? Most certainly it is; and if it were not—But why need I suppose what is absolutely impossible?—But if it were not, I must own I should prefer the title of the ancient philosopher, *viz.*, a citizen of the world, to that of an Englishman, a Frenchman, an European, or to any other appellation whatever.

XV

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

CHARLES LAMB

Sera tamen respexit
Libertas. VIRGIL.

A Clerk I was in London gay.
O'KEEFE.

If peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holydays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly content, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself: but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me

attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No bookstalls deliciously to idle over—No busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and, livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day looked anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at

the desk again, counting upon fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I

had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when, to my utter astonishment, B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!), and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world,

the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

Esto perpetua !

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity ; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner of the Old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue ; I could see no end of my possessions ; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient ; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away ; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in these old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candlelight Time, I used to weary out

my head and eye-sight in bygone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> ——that's born, and has his years come to him,
> In some green desert.

"Years," you will say; "what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been so closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy, by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death.—

> ——'Twas but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;

And yet the distance does the same appear
As if he had been a thousand years from me.
Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since: to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——I take me if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not,—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six and thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know, that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year

supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle, I bequeath among ye.

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel I was a poor Carthusian, from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ven-

turned to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days ; in its distance from, or propinquity to the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, etc. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed the Ethiop white ? What is gone of Black Monday ? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and overcare to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week-day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May morning. It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring ; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for ? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO : he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and

swallow up those accursed cotton-mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.

I am no longer * * * * * *, clerk to the firm of, &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.* I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked taskwork, and have the rest of the day to myself.

XVI

A BACHELOR'S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE.

CHARLES LAMB

As a single man, I have spent a good deal of my time in noting down the infirmities of Married People, to console myself for those superior pleasures, which they tell me I have lost by remaining as I am.

I cannot say that the quarrels of men and their wives ever made any great impression upon me, or had much tendency to strengthen me in those anti-social resolutions, which I took up long ago upon more substantial considerations. What oftenest offends me at the houses of married persons where I visit, is an error of quite a different description ;—it is that they are too loving.

Not too loving neither: that does not explain my meaning. Besides, why should that offend me? The very act of separating themselves from the rest of the world, to have the fuller enjoyment of each other's society, implies that they prefer one another to all the world.

But what I complain of is, that they carry this preference so undisguisedly, they perk it up in the faces of us single people so shamelessly, you cannot be in their company a moment without being made to feel, by some indirect hint or open avowal, that *you* are not the object of this preference. Now there are some things which give no offence, while implied

or taken for granted merely; but expressed, there is much offence in them. If a man were to accost the first homely-featured or plain-dressed young woman of his acquaintance, and tell her bluntly, that she was not handsome or rich enough for him, and he could not marry her, he would deserve to be kicked for his ill manners; yet no less is implied in the fact, that having access and opportunity of putting the question to her, he has never yet thought fit to do it. The young woman understands this as clearly as if it were put into words; but no reasonable young woman would think of making this a ground of a quarrel. Just as little right have a married couple to tell me by speeches and looks, that are scarce less plain than speeches, that I am not the happy man,—the lady's choice. It is enough that I know that I am not: I do not want this perpetual reminding.

The display of superior knowledge or riches may be made sufficiently mortifying; but these admit of a palliative. The knowledge which is brought out to insult me, may accidentally improve me; and in the rich man's houses and pictures,—his parks and gardens, I have a temporary usufruct at least. But the display of married happiness has none of these palliatives: it is throughout pure, unrecompensed, unqualified insult.

Marriage by its best title is a monopoly, and not of the least invidious sort. It is the cunning of most possessors of any exclusive privilege to keep their advantage as much out of sight as possible, that their less favoured neighbours, seeing little of the benefit, may the less be disposed to question the right. But these married monopolists thrust the most obnoxious part of their patent into our faces.

Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a new-married couple,—in that of the lady particularly; it tells you, that her lot is disposed of in this world; that *you* can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none; nor wishes either, perhaps; but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed.

The excessive airs which those people give themselves, founded on the ignorance of us unmarried people, would be more offensive if they were less irrational. We will allow them to understand the mysteries belonging to their own craft better than we who have not had the happiness to be made free of the company: but their arrogance is not content within these limits. If a single person presume to offer his opinion in their presence, though upon the most indifferent subject, he is immediately silenced as an incompetent person. Nay, a young married lady of my acquaintance who, the best of the jest was, had not changed her condition above a fortnight before, in a question on which I had the misfortune to differ from her, respecting the properest mode of breeding oysters for the London market, had the assurance to ask with a sneer, how such an old Bachelor as I could pretend to know anything about such matters.

But what I have spoken of hitherto is nothing to the airs which these creatures give themselves when they come, as they generally do, to have children. When I consider how little of a rarity children are, —that every street and blind alley swarms with them,—that the poorest people commonly have them in most abundance,—that there are few marriages

that are not blest with at least one of these bargains, how often they turn out ill, and defeat the fond hopes of their parents, taking to vicious courses, which end in poverty, disgrace, the gallows, &c.—I cannot for my life tell what cause for pride there can possibly be in having them. If they were young phœnixes, indeed, that were born but one in a year, there might be a pretext. But when they are so common——

I do not advert to the insolent merit which they assume with their husbands on these occasions. Let them look to that. But why *we*, who are not their natural-born subjects, should be expected to bring our spices, myrrh, and incense,—our tribute and homage of admiration—I do not see.

"Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children:" so says the excellent office in our Prayer-book appointed for the churching of women. "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them;" So say I; but then don't let him discharge his quiver upon us that are weaponless;—let them be arrows, but not to gall and stick us. I have generally observed that these arrows are double-headed; they have two forks, to be sure to hit with one or the other. As for instance, where you come into a house which is full of children, if you happen to take no notice of them (you are thinking of something else, perhaps, and turn a deaf ear to their innocent caresses), you are set down as untractable, morose, a hater of children. On the other hand, if you find them more than usually engaging,—if you are taken with their pretty manners, and set about in earnest to romp and play with them, some pretext or other is sure to be found for sending them out of the room: they are too noisy or

an excuse to be proud of them

I adopt a line of theives

boisterous, or Mr.—--does not like children. With one or other of these forks the arrow is sure to hit you.

I could forgive their jealousy, and dispense with toying with their brats, if it gives them any pain; but I think it unreasonable to be called upon to *love* them, where I see no occasion,---to love a whole family, perhaps, eight, nine, or ten, indiscriminately, ---to love all the pretty dears, because children are so engaging.

I know there is a proverb, "Love me, love my dog:" that is not always so very practicable, particularly if the dog be set upon you to tease you or snap at you in sport. But a dog, or a lesser thing, ---any inanimate substance, as a keepsake, a watch or a ring, a tree, or the place where we last parted when my friend went away upon a long absence, I can make shift to love, because I love him, and any thing that reminds me of him; provided it be in its nature indifferent, and apt to receive whatever hue fancy can give it. But children have a real character and an essential being of themselves: they are amiable or unamiable *per se*; I must love or hate them as I see cause for either in their qualities. A child's nature is too serious a thing to admit of its being regarded as a mere appendage to another being, and to be loved or hated accordingly: they stand with me upon their own stock, as much as men and women do. O! but you will say, sure it is an attractive age,---there is something in the tender years of infancy that of itself charms us. That is the very reason why I am more nice about them. I know that a sweet child is the sweetest thing in nature, not even excepting the delicate creatures which bear them; but the prettier the kind of a thing

is, the more desirable it is that it should be pretty of its kind. One daisy differs not much from another in glory; but a violet should look and smell the daintiest.---I was always rather squeamish in my women and children.

But this is not the worst: one must be admitted into their familiarity at least, before they can complain of inattention. It implies visits, and some kind of intercourse. But if the husband be a man with whom you have lived on a friendly footing before marriage,---if you did not come in on the wife's side,---if you did not sneak into the house in her train, but were an old friend in fast habits of intimacy before their courtship was so much as thought on,---look about you---your tenure is precarious---before a twelvemonth shall roll over your head, you shall find your old friend gradually grow cool and altered towards you, and at last seek opportunitie s of breaking with you. I have scarce a married friend of my acquaintance, upon whose firm faith I can rely, whose friendship did not commence *after the period of his marriage.* With some limitations they can endure that: but that the good man should have dared to enter into a solemn league of friendship in which they were not consulted, though it happened before they knew him,—before they that are now man and wife ever met,—this is intolerable to them. Every long friendship, every old authentic intimacy, must be brought into their office to be new stamped with their currency, as a sovereign Prince calls in the good old money that was coined in some reign before he was born or thought of, to be new marked and minted with the stamp of his authority, before he will let it pass current in the world. You may

guess what luck generally befalls such a rusty piece of metal as I am in these *new mintings.*

Innumerable are the ways which they take to insult and worm you out of their husband's confidence. Laughing at all you say with a kind of wonder, as if you were a queer kind of fellow that said good things, *but an oddity,* is one of the ways;—they have a particular kind of stare for the purpose;—till at last the husband, who used to defer to your judgment, and would pass over some excrescences of understanding and manner for the sake of a general vein of observation (not quite vulgar), which he perceived in you, begins to suspect whether you are not altogether a humorist,—a fellow well enough to have consorted with in his bachelor days, but not quite so proper to be introduced to ladies. This may be called the staring way; and is that which has oftenest been put in practice against me.

Then there is the exaggerating way, or the way of irony: that is, where they find you an object of especial regard with their husband, who is not so easily to be shaken from the lasting attachment founded on esteem which he has conceived towards you: by never-qualified exaggerations to cry up all that you say or do, till the good man, who understands well enough that it is all done in compliment to him, grows weary of the debt of gratitude which is due to so much candour, and by relaxing a little on his part, and taking down a peg or two in his enthusiasm, sinks at length to that kindly level of moderate esteem,—that "decent affection and complacent kindness" towards you, where she herself can join in sympathy with him without much stretch and violence to her sincerity.

Another way (for the ways they have to accomplish so desirable a purpose are infinite) is, with a kind of innocent simplicity, continually to mistake what it was which first made their husband fond of you. If an esteem for something excellent in your moral character was that which riveted the chain which she is to break, upon any imaginary discovery of a want of poignancy in your conversation, she will cry, "I thought, my dear, you described your friend, Mr.—as a great wit." If, on the other hand, it was for some supposed charm in your conversation that he first grew to like you, and was content for this to overlook some trifling irregularities in your moral deportment, upon the first notice of any of these she as readily exclaims, "This, my dear, is your good Mr. —— " One good lady whom I took the liberty of expostulating with for not showing me quite so much respect as I thought due to her husband's old friend, had the candour to confess to me that she had often heard Mr. —— speak of me before marriage, and that she had conceived a great desire to be acquainted with me, but that the sight of me had very much disappointed her expectations; for from her husband's representations of me, she had formed a notion that she was to see a fine, tall, officer-like looking man (I use her very words); the very reverse of which proved to be the truth. This was candid; and I had the civility not to ask her in return, how she came to pitch upon a standard of personal accomplishments for her husband's friends which differed so much from his own; for my friend's dimensions as near as possible approximate to mine; he stands five feet five in his shoes, in which I have the advantage of him by about half an inch; and he no more than myself exhibiting any

indications of a martial character in his air or countenance.

These are some of the mortifications which I have encountered in the absurd attempt to visit at their houses. To enumerate them all would be a vain endeavour ; I shall therefore just glance at the very common impropriety of which married ladies are guilty, of treating us as if we were their husbands, and *vice versa*. I mean, when they use us with familiarity, and their husbands with ceremeony. *Testacea*, for instance, kept me the other night two or three hours beyond my usual time of supping, while she was fretting because Mr.—— did not come home, till the oysters were all spoiled, rather than she would be guilty of the impoliteness of touching one in his absence. This was reversing the point of good manners: for ceremony is an invention to take off the uneasy feeling which we derive from knowing ourselves to be less the object of love and esteem with a fellow-creature than some other person is. It endeavours to make up, by superior attentions in little points, for that invidious preference which it is forced to deny in the greater. Had *Testacea* kept the oysters back for me, and withstood her husband's importunities to go to supper, she would have acted according to the strict rules of propriety. I know no ceremony that ladies are bound to observe to their husbands, beyond the point of a modest behaviour and decorum: therefore I must protest against the vicarious gluttony of *Cerasia*, who at her own table sent away a dish of Morellas, which I was applying to with great good will, to her husband at the other end of the table, and recommended a plate of less extraordinary gooseberries to my unwedded palate

in their stead. Neither can I excuse the wanton affront of——. intentional and open insult

But I am weary of stringing up all my married acquaintance by Roman denominations. Let them amend and change their manners, or I promise to record the full-length English of their names, to the terror of all such desperate offenders in future.

Q. Describe in your own words the thr
ays used according to Lamb by wives
women a man out of the friendship
their husbands.

XVII

OXFORD IN THE VACATION

CHARLES LAMB

Casting a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article—as the wary connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it reads not), never fails to consult the *quis sculpsit* in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivares, or a Woollet—methinks I hear you exclaim, Reader, *Who is Elia ?*

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks defunct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same college—a votary of the desk—a notched and cropt scrivener—one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy—in the fore-part of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation—(and none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies)—to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigos, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place *** and then it sends you home with such increased appetite to your books * * * ** not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and

naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, *essays*—so that the very parings of a counting-house are in some sort, the settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has plodded all the morning among the cart rucks of figures and cyphers, frists and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation.—It feels its promotion. ***** So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of *Elia* is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away-with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons,—the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas—

Andrew and John, men famous in old times.

—we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old *Basket Prayer Book*. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture—holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti——I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred: only methought I a little grudged at the coalition of the *better Jude* with Simon-clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them—as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life—"far off their coming shone."—I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventure the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would once in six years merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded—but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority —I am plain Elia—no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher—though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year, falls in so pat with *ours*. Here I can take my walks unmolested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted *ad eundem*. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed, I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers,

and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or curtsy, as I pass, wisely mistaking me for something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle I can be content to pass for nothing short of a Seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one's own, —the tall trees of Christ's, the groves of Magdalen! The halls deserted, and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and pay a devoir to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress (that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality: the immense caves of kitchens, kitchen fire-places, cordial recesses; ovens whose first pies were baked four centuries ago; and spits which have cooked for Chaucer! Not the meanest minister among the dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity! thou wondrous charm, what art thou? that, being nothing, art every thing! When thou *wert*, thou wert not antiquity - then thou wert nothing, but hadst a remoter *antiquity*, as thou calledst it, to look back to with blind veneration: thou thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, *modern*! What mystery lurks in this retroversion? or what half Januses are we, that cannot look forward with the same idolatry with which we for ever revert! the mighty future is as nothing, being everything! the past is every thing, being nothing!

What were thy *dark ages*? Surely the sun rose as brightly then as now, and man got him to his work in the morning. Why is it that we can never

here mention of them without an accompanying feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping!

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning, thy shelves——

What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those sciential apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS. Those *variae lectiones* so tempting to the more erudite palates, do but disturb and unsettle my faith. I am no Herculanean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I apprehend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's Inn—where, like a dove

on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys, attorney's clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, "in calm and sinless peace." The fangs of the law pierce him not—the winds of litigation blow over his humble chambers—the hard sheriff's officer moves his hat as he passes—legal nor illegal discourtesy touches him—none thinks of offering violence or injustice to him—you would as soon "strike an abstract idea."

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected with the two Universities; and has lately lit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C—, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points—particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardour with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here, or at C——. Your caputs and heads of colleges, care less than any body else about these questions.—Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such curiosities to be impertinent—unreverend. They have their good glebe lands *in manu*, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.

D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. *A priori* it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's Inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking shortsightedness (the

effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil) D. is the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend *M.'s* in Bedford Square; and, finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where, asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book—which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor—and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fireside circle at *M.'s*——Mrs. *M.* presiding at it like a Queen Lar, with pretty *A. S.* at her side——striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were "certainly not to return from the country before that day week") and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script)—his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate!—The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with *G. D.*—to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally encountering thee, he passes on with no recognition—or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised—at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor—or Parnassus—or co-sphered with Plato—or, with Harrington, framing "immortal Commonwealths"

—devising some plan of amelioration to thy country, or thy species——peradventure meditating some individual kindness or courtesy, to be done to *thee thyself*, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at thy obtruded personal presence.

D. is delightful any where, but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrowgate. The Cam and the Isis are to him "better than all the waters of Damascus." On 'the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter at the House Beautiful.

XVIII

ON GETTING UP ON COLD MORNINGS

LEIGH HUNT

An Italian author—Giulio Cordara, a Jesuit—has written a poem upon insects, which he begins by insisting, that those troublesome and abominable little animals were created for our annoyance, and that they were certainly not inhabitants of Paradise. We of the north may dispute this piece of theology; but on the other hand, it is as clear as the snow on the house-tops, that Adam was not under the necessity of shaving; and that when Eve walked out of her delicious bower, she did not step upon ice three inches thick.

Some people say it is a very easy thing to get up of a cold morning. You have only, they tell you, to take the resolution; and the thing is done. This may be very true; just as a boy at school has only to take a flogging, and the thing is over. But we have not at all made up our minds upon it; and we find it a very pleasant exercise to discuss the matter, candidly, before we get up. This, at least, is not idling, though it may be lying. It affords an excellent answer to those who ask how lying in bed can be indulged in by a reasoning being,—a rational creature. How? Why, with the argument calmly at work in one's head, and the clothes over one's shoulder. Oh—it is a fine way of spending a sensible, impartial half-hour.

If these people would be more charitable they would get on with their argument better. But they are apt to reason so ill, and to assert so dogmatically that one could wish to have them stand round one's bed, of a bitter morning, and *lie* before their faces. They ought to hear both sides of the bed, the inside and out. If they cannot entertain themselves with their own thoughts for half-an-hour or so, it is not the fault of those who can.

Candid inquiries into one's decumbency, besides the greater or less privileges to be allowed a man in proportion to his ability of keeping early hours, the work given his faculties, etc., will at least concede their due merits to such representations as the following. In the first place, says the injured but calm appealer, I have been warm all night, and find my system in a state perfectly suitable to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature, that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold,—from fire to ice. They are 'haled' out of their 'beds', says Milton, by 'harpy-footed furies,'—fellows who come to call them. On my first movement towards the anticipation of getting up I find that such parts of the sheets and bolster as are exposed to the air of the room are stone-cold. On opening my eyes, the first thing that meets them is my own breath rolling forth, as if in the open air, like smoke out of a chimney. Think of this symptom. Then I turn my eyes sideways and see the window all frozen over. Think of that. Then the servant comes in. 'It is very cold this morning,

is it not?'—'Very cold, sir,'—'Very cold indeed, isn't it?'—'Very cold indeed, sir.'—'More than usually so, isn't it, even for this weather?' (Here the servant's wit and good-nature are put to a considerable test, and the inquirer lies on thorns for the answer.) 'Why, sir . . . . I think it *is*.' (Good creature! There is not a better or more truth-telling servant going.) 'I must rise, however—get me some warm water.'—Here comes a fine interval between the departure of the servant and the arrival of the hot water; during which, of course, it is of 'no use?' to get up. The hot water comes, 'Is it quite hot?' —'Yes, sir.'—'Perhaps too hot for shaving; I must wait a little?' 'No, sir; it will just do.' (There is an over-nice propriety sometimes, an officious zeal of virtue, a little troublesome.) 'Oh—the shirt—you must air my clean shirt;—linen gets very damp this weather.'—'Yes, sir.' Here another delicious five minutes. A knock at the door. 'Oh, the shirt—very well. My stockings—I think the stockings had better be aired too'—'Very well, sir.' Here another interval. At length everything is ready, except myself. I now, continues our incumbent (a happy word, by-the-by, for a country vicar)—I now cannot help thinking a good deal—who can?—upon the unnecessary and villainous custom of shaving: it is a thing so unmanly (here I nestle closer)—so effeminate (here I recoil from an unlucky step into the colder part of the bed.)—No wonder that the Queen of France took part with the rebels against that degenerate king, her husband, who first affronted her smooth visage with a face like her own. The Emperor Julian never showed the luxuriancy of his genius to better advantage than in reviving the flowing beard. Look at Cardinal Bembo's picture—at

Michael Angelo's—at Titian's—at Shakespeare's—at Fletcher's—at Spenser's—at Chaucer's—at Alfred's—at Plato's—I could name a great man for every tick of my watch.—Look at the Turks, a grave and otiose people.—Think of Haroun Al Raschid and Bed-ridden Hassan.—Think of Wortley Montague, the worthy son of his mother, above the prejudice of his time.—Look at the Persian gentlemen, whom one is ashamed of meeting about the suburbs, their dress and appearance are so much finer than our own.—Lastly, think of the razor itself—how totally opposed to every sensation of bed—how cold, how edgy, how hard! how utterly different from anything like the warm and circling amplitude, which

> Sweetly recommends itself
> Unto our gentle senses.

Add to this, benumbed fingers, which may help you to cut yourself, a quivering body, a frozen towel, and a ewer full of ice; and he that says there is nothing to oppose in all this, only shows that he has no merit in opposing it.

Thomson the poet, who exclaims in his *Seasons*—

> Falsely luxurious! Will not man awake?

used to lie in bed till noon, because he said he had no motive in getting up. He could imagine the good of rising; but then he could also imagine the good of lying still; and his exclamation, it must be allowed, was made upon summer-time, not winter. We must proportion the argument to the individual character. A money-getter may be drawn out of his bed by three or four pence; but this will not suffice for a student. A proud man may say, 'What shall I think of myself, if I don't get up?' but the more humble one will be content to waive this prodigious

notion of himself, out of respect to his kindly bed. The mechanical man shall get up without any ado at all; and so shall the barometer. An ingenious lier in bed will find hard matter of discussion even on the score of health and longevity. He will ask us for our proofs and precedents of the ill effects of lying later in cold weather; and sophisticate much on the advantages of an even temperature of body; of the natural propensity (pretty universal) to have one's way; and of the animals that roll themselves up and sleep all the winter. As to longevity, he will ask whether the longest is of necessity the best; and whether Holborn is the handsomest street in London.

XIX

THE OLD GENTLEMAN

LEIGH HUNT

Our Old Gentleman, in order to be exclusively himself, must be either a widower or a bachelor. Suppose the former. We do not mention his precise age, which would be invidious:—nor whether he wears his own hair or a wig, which would be wanting in universality. If a wig, it is a compromise between the more modern scratch and the departed glory of the toupee. If his own hair, it is white, in spite of his favourite grandson, who used to get on the chair behind him, and pull the silver hairs out, ten years ago. If he is bald at top, the hair-dresser, hovering and breathing about him like a second youth, takes care to give the bald place as much powder as the covered, in order that he may convey to the sensorium within a pleasing indistinctness of idea respecting the exact limits of skin and hair. He is very clean and neat; and in warm weather is proud of opening his waistcoat half-way down, and letting so much of his frill be seen, in order to show his hardiness as well as taste. His watch and shirt-buttons are of the best; and he does not care if he has two rings on a finger. If his watch ever failed him at the club or coffee-house, he would take a walk every day to the nearest clock of good character, purely to keep it right. He has a cane at home, but seldom uses it, on finding it out of fashion

with his elderly juniors. He has a small cocked hat for gala days, which he lifts higher from his head than the round one when made a bow to. In his pockets are two handkerchiefs (one for the neck at night-time), his spectacles, and his pocket-book. The pocket-book, among other things, contains a receipt for a cough, and some verses cut out of an odd sheet of an old magazine, on the lovely Duchess of A., beginning—

"When beauteous Mira walks the plain"

He intends this for a commonplace book which he keeps, consisting of passages in verse and prose, cut out of newspapers and magazines, and pasted in columns, some of them rather gay. His principal other books are Shakespeare's Plays and Milton's Paradise Lost; the Spectator, the History of England, the Works of Lady W. M. Montague, Pope and Churchill; Middleton's Geography; the Gentleman's Magazine; Sir John Sinclair on Longevity; several plays with portraits in character; Account of Elizabeth Canning, Memoirs of George Ann Bellamy, Poetical Amusements at Bath-Easton, Blair's Works, Elegant Extracts; Junius as originally published; a few pamphlets on the American War and Lord George Gordon, etc., and one on the French Revolution. In his sitting-rooms are some engravings from Hogarth and Sir Joshua; an engraved portrait of the Marquis of Granby; ditto of M. le Comte de Grasse surrendering to Admiral Rodney; a humorous piece after Penny; and a portrait of himself, painted by Sir Joshua. His wife's portrait is in his chamber,

looking upon his bed. She is a little girl, stepping inquiries respecting the old style of music, to sing forward with a smile, and a pointed toe, as if going to dance. He lost her when she was sixty.

The Old Gentleman is an early riser, because he intends to live at least twenty years longer. He continues to take tea for breakfast, in spite of what is said against its nervous effects, having been satisfied on that point some years ago by Dr. Johnson's criticism on Hanway, and a great liking for tea previously. His china cups and saucers have been broken since his wife's death, all but one, which is religiously kept for his use. He passes his morning in walking or riding, looking in at auctions, looking after his India bonds or some such money securities, furthering some subscription set on foot by his excellent friend Sir John, or cheapening a new old print for his portfolio. He also hears of the newspapers, not caring to see them till after dinner at the coffee-house. He may also cheapen a fish or so, the fishmonger soliciting his doubting eye as he passes with a profound bow of recognition. He eats a pear before dinner.

His dinner at the coffee-house is served up to him at the accustomed hour, in the old accustomed way, and by the accustomed waiter. If William did not bring it the fish would be sure to be stale and the flesh new. He eats no tart, or, if he ventures on a little, takes cheese with it. You might as soon attempt to persuade him out of his senses as that cheese is not good for digestion. He takes port; and if he has drunk more than usual, and in a more private place, may be induced, by some respectful inquiries respecting the old style of music, to sing

a song composed by Mr. Oswald or Mr. Lampe, such as—

> "Chloe, by that borrowed kiss,"

or

> "Come, gentle god of soft repose,"

or his wife's favourite ballad, beginning—

> "At Upton on the hill,
> There lived a happy pair."

Of course, no such exploit can take place in the coffee-room: but he will canvass the theory of that matter there with you, or discuss the weather, or the markets, or the theatres, or the merits of "my Lord North" or "my Lord Rockingham;" for he rarely says simply, lord: it is generally "my lord," trippingly and genteelly off the tongue. If alone after dinner, his great delight is the newspaper, which he prepares to read by wiping his spectacles, carefully adjusting them on his eyes, and drawing the candle close to him, so as to stand sideways betwixt his ocular aim and the small type. He then holds the paper at arm's length, and dropping his eyelids half down and his mouth half open, takes cognisance of the day's information. If he leaves off, it is only when the door is opened by a new-comer, or when he suspects somebody is over-anxious to get the paper out of his hand. On these occasions he gives an important hem! or so, and resumes.

In the evening our Old Gentleman is fond of going to the theatre, or of having a game of cards. If he enjoys the latter at his own house or lodgings, he likes to play with some friends whom he has known for many years; but an elderly stranger may be introduced, if quiet and scientific; and the

privilege is extended to younger men of letters, who, if ill players, are good losers. Not that he is a miser, but to win money at cards is like proving his victory by getting the baggage; and to win of a younger man is a substitute for his not being able to beat him at rackets. He breaks up early, whether at home or abroad.

At the theatre he likes the front row in the pit. He comes early, if he can do so without getting into a squeeze, and sits patiently waiting for the drawing up of the curtain, with his hands placidly lying one over the other on the top of his stick. He generously admires some of the best performers, but thinks them far inferior to Garrick, Woodward, and Clive. During splendid scenes, he is anxious that the little boy should see.

He has been induced to look in at Vauxhall again, but likes it still less than he did years back, and cannot bear it in comparison with Ranelagh. He thinks everything looks poor, flaring, and jaded. "Ah!" says he, with a sort of triumphant sigh, "Ranelagh was a noble place! Such taste, such elegance, such beauty! There was the Duchess of A., the finest woman in England, sir; and Mrs. L., a mighty fine creature; and Lady Susan What's-her-name, that had that unfortunate affair with Sir Charles. Sir, they came swimming by you like the swans."

The Old Gentleman is very particular in having his slippers ready for him at the fire when he comes home. He is also extremely choice in his snuff, and delights to get a fresh boxful in Tavistock Street in his way to the theatre. His box is a curiosity from India. He calls favourite young ladies by their

Christian names, however slightly acquainted with them; and has a privilege of saluting all brides, mothers, and, indeed, every species of lady, on the least holiday occasion. If the husband, for instance, has met with a piece of luck, he instantly moves forward, and gravely kisses the wife on the cheek. The wife then says, "My niece, sir, from the country;" and he kisses the niece. The niece, seeing her cousin biting her lips at the joke, says, "My cousin Harriet, sir;" and he kisses the cousin. He "never recollects such weather," except during the "Great Frost," or when he rode down with "Jack Skrimshire to Newmarket." He grows young again in his little grandchildren, especially the one which he thinks most like himself, which is the handsomest. Yet he likes best, perhaps, the one most resembling his wife; and will sit with him on his lap, holding his hand in silence, for a quarter-of-an-hour together. He plays most tricks with the former, and makes him sneeze. He asks little boys in general who was the father of Zebedee's children. If his grandsons are at school he often goes to see them, and makes them blush by telling the master or the upper-scholars that they are fineboys, and of a precocious genius. He is much struck when an old acquaintance dies, but adds that he lived too fast, and that poor Bob was a sad dog in his youth—"a very sad dog, sir, mightily set upon a short life and a merry one."

When he gets very old indeed, he will sit for whole evenings, and say little or nothing; but informs you that there is Mrs. Jones (the housekeeper) —"*She'll* talk."

XX

ON GOING A JOURNEY

WILLIAM HAZLITT

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

> "The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedgerows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

> "a friend in my retreat,
> Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a

little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

> "May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff o' the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance

that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better than keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others: to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said, but, in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like

the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company seems extravagance or affectation; and, on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered), is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue." My old friend Coleridge, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory

way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme ; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had ;" and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following :

"Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbours o'ergrown with woodbines, caves and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep ,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds : but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I

can make nothing out on the spot: I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. Lamb is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then, after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea—

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate—"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed on cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean con-

templation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen [getting ready for the gentlemen in the parlour]. *Procul, O procul este profani!* These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. [How I love to see the camps of the gypsies, and to sigh my soul into that sort of life. If I express this feeling to another, he may qualify and spoil it with some objection.] I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits: or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world: but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumspection and confine." The incognito of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord of one's self, encumbered with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal

identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas - at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in a boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain

all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame d'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April 1798 that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling ever its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What

other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced. I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see

of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, land to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of pasteboard on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression; we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names that we had not thought of for years; but for the time

all the rest of the world is forgotten!—To return to the question I have quitted above:—

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place;" nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *eclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

> "With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd—"

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home in-

creases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears: nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but

a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings:

> "Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

XXI

THE LANTERN-BEARERS

R. L. STEVENSON

These boys congregated every autumn about a certain easterly fisher-village, where they tasted in a high degree the glory of existence. The place was created seemingly on purpose for the diversion of young gentlemen. A street or two of houses, mostly red and many of them tiled; a number of fine trees clustered about the manse and the kirkyard, and turning the chief street into a shady alley; many little gardens more than usually bright with flowers; nets a-drying, and fisher-wives scolding in the backward parts; a smell of fish, a genial smell of seaweed; whiffs of blowing sand at the street-corners; shops with golf-balls and bottled lollipops: another shop with penny pickwicks (that remarkable cigar) and the *London Journal*, dear to me for its startling pictures, and a few novels, dear for their suggestive names: such, as well as memory serves me, were the ingredients of the town. These, you are to conceive posted on a spit between two sandy bays, and sparsely flanked with villas—enough for the boys to lodge in with their subsidiary parents, not enough (not yet enough) to cocknify the scene: a haven in the rocks in front: in front of that, a file of gray islets: to the left, endless links and sand wreaths, a wilderness of hiding-holes, alive with popping rabits and soaring gulls: to the right, a range of seaward crags, one rugged brow beyond another;

the ruins of a mighty and ancient fortress on the brink of one; coves between—now charmed into sunshine quiet, now whistling with wind and clamorous with bursting surges; the dens and sheltered hollows redolent of thyme and southernwood, the air at the cliff's edge brisk and clean and pungent of the sea—in front of all, the Bass Rock, tilted seaward like a doubtful bather, the surf ringing it with white, the solan-geese hanging round its summit like a great and glittering smoke. This choice piece of seaboard was sacred, besides, to the wrecker: and the Bass, in the eye of fancy, still flew the colours of King James; and in the ear of fancy the arches of Tantallon still rang with horse-shoe iron, and echoed to the commands of Bell-the-Cat.

There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but the embarrassment of pleasure. You might golf if you wanted; but I seem to have been better employed. You might secrete yourself in the Lady's Walk, a certain sunless dingle of elders, all mossed over by the damp as green as grass, and dotted here and there by the stream-side with roofless walls, the cold homes of anchorites. To fit themselves for life, and with a special eye to acquire the art of smoking, it was even common for the boys to harbour there; and you might have seen a single penny pickwick, honestly shared in lengths with a blunt knife, bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Again, you might join our fishing parties, where we sat perched as thick as solan-geese, a covey of little anglers, boy and girl, ankling over each other's heads, to the much entanglement of lines and loss of podleys and consequent shrill recrimination—shrill as the geese themselves. Indeed, had that

been all, you might have done this often; but though fishing be a fine pastime, the podley is scarce to be regarded as a dainty for the table; and it was a point of honour that a boy should eat all that he had taken. Or again, you might climb the Law, where the whale's jawbone stood landmark in the buzzing wind, and behold the face of many counties, and the smoke and spires of many towns, and the sails of distant ships. You might bathe, now in the flaws of fine weather, that we pathetically call our summer, now in a gale of wind, with the sand scourging your bare hide, your clothes thrashing abroad from underneath their guardian stone, the froth of the great breakers casting you headlong ere it had drowned your knees. Or you might explore the tidal rocks, above all in the ebb of springs, when the very roots of the hill were for the nonce discovered; following my leader from one group to another, grouping in slippery tangle for the wreck of ships, wading in pools after the abominable creatures of the sea, and ever with an eye cast backward on the march of the tide and the menaced line of your retreat. And then you might go Crusoeing, a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging perhaps a house under the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware, and cooking apples there—if they were truly apples, for I sometimes suppose the merchant must have played us off with some inferior and quite local fruit, capable of resolving, in the neighbourhood of fire, into mere sand and smoke and iodine; or perhaps pushing to Tantallon, you might lunch on sandwiches and visions in the grassy court, while the wind hummed in the crumbling turrets; or clambering along the coast, eat geans (the worst, I must suppose, in Christendom) from an adventurous

gean tree that had taken root under a cliff, where it was shaken with an ague of east wind, and silvered after gales with salt, and grew so foreign among its bleak surroundings that to eat of its produce was an adventure in itself.

There are mingled some dismal memories with so many that were joyous. Of the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Canty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody—horror!—the fisher-wife herself, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even to-day (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight. She was lodged in the little old jail in the chief street; but whether or no she died there, with a wise terror of the worst, I never inquired. She had been tippling; it was but a dingy tragedy; and it seems strange and hard that, after all these years, the poor crazy sinner should be still pilloried on her cart in the scrap-book of my memory. Nor shall I readily forget a certain house in the Quadrant where a visitor died, and a dark old woman continued to dwell alone with the dead body; nor how this old woman conceived a hatred to myself and one of my cousins, and in the dread hour of the dusk, as we were clambering on the garden-walls, opened a window in that house of mortality and cursed us in a shrill voice and with a marrowy choice of language. It was a pair of very colourless urchins that fled down the lane from this remarkable experience! But I recall with a more doubtful sentiment, compounded out of fear and exultation, the coil of equinoctial tempests; trumpeting squalls, scouring flaws of rain; the boats with

their reefed lugsails scudding for the harbour mouth, where danger lay, for it was hard to make when the wind had any east in it; the wives clustered with blowing shawls at the pier-head, where (if fate was against them) they might see boat and husband and sons—their whole wealth and their whole family—engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbours forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and she squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Maenad.

These are things that I recall with interest; but what my memory dwells upon the most, I have been all this while withholding. It was a sport peculiar to the place, and indeed to a week or so of our two months' holiday there. Maybe it still flourishes in its native spot; for boys and their pastimes are swayed by periodic forces inscrutable to man: so that tops and marbles reappear in their due season, regular like the sun and moon; and the harmless art of knucklebones has seen the fall of the Roman empire and the rise of the United States. It may still flourish in its native spot, but nowhere else, I am persuaded; for I tried myself to introduce it on Tweed-side, and was defeated lamentably; its charm being quite local, like a country wine that cannot be exported.

The idle manner of it was this:—

Toward the end of September, when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and

over them, such was the rigour of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers; their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we had certainly an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, and to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious 'Have you got your lantern?' and a gratified 'Yes!' That was the shibboleth, and very needful too; for as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognize a lantern-bearer, unless (like the polecat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them—for the cabin was usually locked, or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull's-eyes discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-

boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk. Woe is me that I may not give some specimens—some of their foresights of life, or keep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature, these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public: a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.

II

It is said that a poet has died young in the breast of the most stolid. It may be contended, rather, that this (somewhat minor) bard in almost every case survives, and is the spice of life to the possessor. Justice is not done to the versatility and the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination. His life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud; there will be some golden chamber at the heart of it, in which he dwells delighted; and for as dark as his pathway seems to the observer, he will have some kind of a bull's-eye at his belt.

It would be hard to pick out a career more cheerless than that of Dancer, the miser, as he figures in the 'Old Bailey Reports', a prey to the most sordid persecutions, the butt of his neighbourhood, betrayed by his hired man, his house beleaguered by the impish schoolboy, and he himself grinding and fuming and

impotently fleeing to the law against these pin-pricks. You marvel at first that any one should willingly prolong a life so destitute of charm and dignity; and then you call to memory that had he chosen, had he ceased to be a miser, he could have been freed at once from these trials, and might have built himself a castle and gone escorted by a squadron. For the love of more recondite joys, which we cannot estimate, which, it may be, we should envy, the man had willingly forgone both comfort and consideration. 'His mind to him a kingdom was'; and sure enough, digging into that mind, which seems at first a dust-heap, we unearth some priceless jewels. For Dancer must have had the love of power and the disdain of using it, a noble character in itself; disdain of many pleasures, a chief part of what is commonly called wisdom; disdain of the inevitable end, that finest trait of mankind; scorn of men's opinions, another element of virtue; and at the back of all, a conscience just like yours and mine, whining like a cur, swindling like a thimble-rigger, but still pointing (there or thereabout) to some conventional standard. Here were a cabinet portrait to which Hawthorne perhaps had done justice; and yet not Hawthorne either, for he was mildly minded, and it lay not in him to create for us that throb of the miser's pulse, his fretful energy of gusto, his vast arms of ambition clutching in he knows not what: insatiable, insane, a god with a muck-rake. Thus, at least, looking in the bosom of the miser, consideration detects the poet in the full tide of life, with more, indeed, of the poetic fire than usually goes to epics; and tracing that mean man about his cold hearth, and to and fro in his discomfortable house, spies within him a blazing bonfire of delight. And so with others, who do not live by

bread alone, but by some cherished and perhaps fantastic pleasure; who are meat salesmen to the external eye, and possibly to themselves are Shakespeares, Napoleons, or Beethovens; who have not one virtue to rub against another in the field of active life, and yet perhaps, in the life of contemplation, sit with the saints. We see them on the street, and we can count their buttons; but heaven knows in what they pride themselves! heaven knows where they have set their treasure!

There is one fable that touches very near the quick of life: the fable of the monk who passed into the woods, heard a bird break into song, hearkened for a trill or two, and found himself on his return a stranger at his convent gates; for he had been absent fifty years, and of all his comrades there survived but one to recognize him. It is not only in the woods that this enchanter carols, though perhaps he is native there. He sings in the most doleful places. The miser hears him and chuckles, and the days are moments. With no more apparatus than an ill-smelling lantern I have evoked him on the naked links. All life that is not merely mechanical is spun out of two strands: seeking for that bird and hearing him. And it is just this that makes life so hard to value, and the delight of each so incommunicable. And just a knowledge of this, and a remembrance of those fortunate hours in which the bird has sung to us, that fills us with such wonder when we turn the pages of the realist. There, to be sure, we find a picture of life in so far as it consists of mud and of old iron, cheap desires and cheap fears, that which we are ashamed to remember and that which we are careless whether we forget; but of the note of that time-devouring nightingale we hear no news.

The case of these writers of romance is most obscure. They have been boys and youths; they have lingered outside the window of the beloved, who was then most probably writing to some one else; they have sat before a sheet of paper, and felt themselves mere continents of congested poetry, not one line of which would flow; they have walked alone in the woods, they have walked in cities under the countless lamps; they have been to sea, they have hated, they have feared, they have longed to knife a man, and may be done it; the wild taste of life has stung their palate. Or, if you deny them all the rest, one pleasure at least they have tasted to the full—their books are there to prove it—the keen pleasure of successful literary composition. And yet they fill the globe with volumes, whose cleverness inspires me with despairing admiration, and whose consistent falsity to all I care to call existence, with despairing wrath. If I had no better hope than to continue to revolve among the dreary and petty businesses, and to be removed by the paltry hopes and fears with which they surround and animate their heroes, I declare I would die now. But there has never an hour of mine gone quite so dully yet; if it were spent waiting at a railway junction, I would have some scattering thoughts, I could count some grains of memory, compared to which the whole of one of these romances seems but dross.

These writers would retort (if I take them properly) that this was very true; that it was the same with themselves and other persons of (what they call) the artistic temperament; that in this we were exceptional and should apparently be ashamed of ourselves; but that our works must deal exclusively with (what they call) the average man, who was a pro-

digious dull fellow, and quite dead to all but the paltriest considerations. I accept the issue. We can only know others by ourselves. The artistic temperament (a plague on the expression!) does not make us different from our fellowmen, or it would make us incapable of writing novels; and the average man (a murrain on the word!) is just like you and me, or he would not be average. It was Whitman who stamped a kind of Birmingham sacredness upon the latter phrase; but Whitman knew very well, and showed very nobly, that the average man was full of joys and full of a poetry of his own. And this harping on life's dullness and man's meanness is a loud profession of incompetence; it is one of two things: the cry of the blind eye, *I cannot see*, or the complaint of the dumb tongue, *I cannot utter*. To draw a life without delights is to prove I have not realized it. To picture a man without some sort of poetry—well, it goes near to prove my case, for it shows an author may have little enough. To see Dancer only as a dirty, old, small-minded, impotently fuming man, in a dirty house, besieged by Harrow boys, and probably beset by small attorneys, is to show myself as keen an observer as . . . the Harrow boys. But these young gentlemen (with a more becoming modesty) were content to pluck Dancer by the coat-tails; they did not suppose they had surprised his secret or could put him living in a book: and it is there my error would have lain. Or say that in the same romance—I continue to call these books romances, in the hope of giving pain—say that in the same romance, which now begins really to take shape, I should leave to speak of Dancer, and follow instead the Harrow boys; and say that I came on some such business as that of my lantern-bearers on the links; and described the

boys as very cold, spat upon by flurries of rain, and drearily surrounded, all of which they were; and their talk as silly and indecent, which it certainly was. I might upon these lines, and had I Zola's genius, turn out, in a page or so, a gem of literary art, render the lantern-light with the touches of a master, and lay on the indecency with the ungrudging hand of love; and when all was done, what a triumph would my picture be of shallowness and dullness! how it would have missed the point! how it would have belied the boys! To the ear of the stenographer, the talk is merely silly and indecent; but ask the boys themselves, and they are discussing (as it is highly proper they should) the possibilities of existence. To the eye of the observer they are wet and cold and drearily surrounded; but ask themselves, and they are in the heaven of a recondite pleasure, the ground of which is an ill-smelling lantern. √

III

For, to repeat, the ground of a man's joy is often hard to hit. It may hinge at times upon a mere accessory, like the lantern, it may reside, like Dancer's, in the mysterious inwards of psychology. It may consist with perpetual failure, and find exercise in the continued chase. It has so little bond with externals (such as the observer scribbles in his note-book) that it may even touch them not; and the man's true life, for which he consents to live, lie altogether in the field of fancy. The clergyman, in his spare hours, may be winning battles, the farmer sailing ships, the banker reaping triumph in the arts: all leading another life, plying another trade from that

they chose; like the poet's housebuilder, who, after all, is cased in stone,

> 'By his fireside, as impotent fancy prompts,
> Rebuilds it to his liking.'

In such a case the poetry runs underground. The observer (poor soul, with his documents!) is all abroad. For to look at the man is but to court deception. We shall see the trunk from which he draws his nourishment; but he himself is above and abroad in the green dome of foliage, hummed through by winds and nested in by nightingales. And the true realism were that of the poets, to climb up after him like a squirrel, and catch some glimpse of the heaven for which he lives. And the true realism, always and everywhere, is that of the poets: to find out where joy resides, and give it a voice far beyond singing.

For to miss the joy is to miss all. In the joy of the actors lies the sense of any action. That is the explanation, that the excuse. To one who has not the secret of the lanterns, the scene upon the links is meaningless. And hence the haunting and truly spectral unreality of realistic books. Hence, when we read the English realists, the incredulous wonder with which we observe the hero's constancy under the submerging tide of dullness, and how he bears up with his jibbing sweetheart, and endures the chatter of idiot girls, and stands by his whole unfeatured wilderness of an existence, instead of seeking relief in drink or foreign travel. Hence in the French, in that meat-market of middle-aged sensuality, the disgusted surprise with which we see the hero drift sidelong, and practically quite untempted, into every description of misconduct and dishonour. In each, we miss the personal poetry, the enchanted

atmosphere, that rainbow work of fancy that clothes what is naked and seems to ennoble what is base; in each, life falls dead like dough, instead of soaring away like a balloon into the colours of the sunset; each is true, each inconceivable; for no man lives in the external truth, among salts and acids, but in the warm, phantasmagoric chamber of his brain, with the painted windows and the storied walls.

Of this falsity we have had a recent example from a man who knows far better—Tolstoi's *Powers of Darkness*. Here is a piece full of force and truth, yet quite untrue. For before Mikita was led into so dire a situation he was tempted, and temptations are beautiful at least in part; and a work which dwells on the ugliness of crime and gives no hint of any loveliness in the temptation, sins against the modesty of life, and even when a Tolstoi writes it, sinks to melodrama. The peasants are not understood; they saw their life in fairer colour; even the deaf girl was clothed in poetry for Mikita, or he had never fallen. And so, once again, even an Old Bailey melodrama, without some brightness of poetry and lustre of existence, falls into the inconceivable and ranks with fairy tales.

IV

In nobler books we are moved with something like the emotions of life; and this emotion is very variously provoked. We are so moved when Levine labours in the field, when Andre sinks beyond emotion, when Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough meet beside the river, when Antony, 'not cowardly, puts off his helmet,' when Kent has infinite pity on the dying Lear, when, in Dostoieffsky's *Despised and*

Rejected, the uncomplaining hero drains his cup of suffering and virtue. These are notes that please the great heart of man. Not only love, and the fields, and the bright face of danger, but sacrifice and death and unmerited suffering humbly supported, touch in us the vein of the poetic. We love to think of them, we long to try them, we are humbly hopeful that we may prove heroes also.

We have heard, perhaps, too much of lesser matters. Here is the door, here is the open air. *Itur in antiquom silvam.*

XXII

AN APOLOGY FOR IDLERS

R. L. STEVENSON

'BOSWELL: We grow weary when idle.

'JOHNSON: That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if we were idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another."

Just now, when every one is bound, under pain of a decree in absence convicting them of *lese-respectability*, to enter on some lucrative profession, and labour therein with something not far short of enthusiasm, a cry from the opposite party who are content when they have enough, and like to look on and enjoy in the meanwhile, savours a little of bravado and gasconade. And yet this should not be. Idleness so called, which does not consist in doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognized in the dogmatic formularies of the ruling class, has as good a right to state its position as industry itself. It is admitted that the presence of people who refuse to enter in the great handicap race for sixpenny pieces, is at once an insult and a disenchantment for those who do. A fine fellow (as we see so many) takes his determination, votes for sixpences, and in the emphatic Americanism, 'goes for' them. And while such an one is ploughing distressfully up the road, it is not hard to understand his resentment, when he perceives cool persons in the meadows by the wayside, lying with a handkerchief over their ears and a glass at their elbow. Alexander is touched

in a very delicate place by the disregard of Diogenes. Where was the glory of having taken Rome for these tumultuous barbarians, who poured into the Senate house, and found the Fathers sitting silent and unmoved by their success? It is a sore thing to have laboured along and scaled the arduous hilltops, and when all is done find humanity indifferent to your achievement. Hence physicists condemn the unphysical; financiers have only a superficial toleration for those who know little of stocks; literary persons despise the unlettered; and people of all pursuits combine to disparage those who have none.

But though this is one difficulty of the subject, it is not the greatest. You could not be put in prison for speaking against industry, but you can be sent to Coventry for speaking like a fool. The greatest difficulty with most subjects is to do them well; therefore, please to remember this is an apology. It is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favour of diligence; only there is something to be said against it, and that is what, on the present occasion, I have to say. To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written a book of travels in Montenegro, is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

It is surely beyond a doubt that people should be a good deal idle in youth. For though here and there a Lord Macaulay may escape from school honours with all his wits about him, most boys pay so dear for their medals that they never afterwards have a shot in their locker, and begin the world bankrupt. And the same holds true during all the time a lad is educating himself, or suffering others to educate him. It must have been a very foolish old gentleman who addressed Johnson at Oxford in these

words: 'Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task.' The old gentleman seems to have been unaware that many other things besides reading grow irksome, and not a few become impossible, by the time a man has to use spectacles and cannot walk without a stick. Books are good enough in their own way, but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life. It seems a pity to sit like the Lady of Shalott, peering into a mirror, with your back turned on all the bustle and glamour of reality. And if a man reads very hard, as the old anecdote reminds us, he will have little time for thought.

If you look back on your own education, I am sure it will not be the full, vivid, instructive hours of truantry that you regret; you would rather cancel some lack-lustre periods between sleep and waking in the class. For my own part, I have attended a good many lectures in my time. I still remember that the spinning of a top is a case of Kinetic Stability. I still remember that Emphyteusis is not a disease, nor Stillicide a crime. But though I would not willingly part with such scraps of science, I do not set the same store by them as by certain other odds and ends that I came by in the open street while I was playing truant. This is not the moment to dilate on that mighty place of education, which was the favourite school of Dickens and of Balzac, and turns out yearly many inglorious masters in the Science of the Aspects of Life. Suffice it to say this: if a lad does not learn in the streets, it is because he has no faculty of learning. Nor is the truant always in the streets, for if he prefers, he may go out by the

gardened suburbs into the country. He may pitch on some tuft of lilacs over a burn, and smoke innumerable pipes to the tune of the water on the stones. A bird will sing in the thicket. And there he may fall into a vein of kindly thought, and see things in a new perspective. Why, if this be not education, what is? We may conceive Mr. Worldly Wiseman accosting such an one, and the conversation that should thereupon ensue:—

'How now, young fellow, what dost thou here?'

'Truly, sir, I take mine ease.'

'Is not this the hour of the class? and should'st thou not be plying thy Book with diligence, to the end thou mayest obtain knowledge?'

'Nay, but thus also I follow after Learning, by your leave.'

'Learning, quotha! After what fashion, I pray thee? Is it mathematics?'

'No, to be sure.'

'Is it metaphysics?'

'Nor that.'

'Is it some language?'

'Nay, it is no language.'

'Is it a trade?'

'Nor a trade neither.'

'Why, then, what is't?'

'Indeed, sir, as time may soon come for me to go upon Pilgrimage, I am desirous to note what is commonly done by persons in my case, and where are the ugliest Sloughs and Thickets on the Road; as also, what manner of staff is of the best service. Moreover, I lie here, by this water, to learn by root-of-heart a lesson which my master teaches me to call Peace, or Contentment.'

Hereupon Mr. Worldly Wiseman was much commoved with passion, and shaking his cane with a very threatful countenance, broke forth upon this wise: 'Learning, quotha!' said he; 'I would have all such rogues scourged by the Hangman!'

And so he would go his way, ruffling out his cravat with a crackle of starch, like a turkey when it spread its feathers.

Now this, of Mr. Wiseman's, is the common opinion. A fact is not called a fact, but a piece of gossip, if it does not fall into one of your scholastic categories. An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by; or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the workhouse is too good for you. It is supposed that all knowledge is at the bottom of a well, or the far end of a telescope. Saint-Beuve, as he grew older, came to regard all experience as a single great book, in which to study for a few years ere we go hence, and it seemed all one to him whether you should read in Chapter XX, which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter XXXIX, which is hearing the band play in the gardens. As a matter of fact, an intelligent person, looking out of his eyes and hearkening in his ears, with a smile on his face all the time, will get more true education than many another in a life of heroic vigils. There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and labourious science; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, that you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of life. While others are filling their memory with a lumber of words, one-half of which they will forget before the week be out, your truant may learn some really

useful art: to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar, or to speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men. Many who have 'plied their book diligently,' and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore, come out of the study with an ancient and owl-like demeanour, and prove dry, stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of life. Many make a large fortune who remain underbred and pathetically stupid to the last. And meanwhile there goes the idler, who began life along with them—by your leave, a different picture. He has had time to take care of his health and his spirits; he has been a great deal in the open air, which is the most salutary of all things for both body and mind; and if he has never read the great Book in very recondite places, he has dipped into it and skimmed it over to excellent purpose. Might not the student afford some Hebrew roots, and the business man some of his half-crowns, for a share of the idler's knowledge of life at large, and Art of Living? Nay, and the idler has another and more important quality than these. I mean his wisdom. He who has much looked on at the childish satisfaction of other people in their hobbies, will regard his own with only a very ironical indulgence. He will not be heard among the dogmatists. He will have a great and cool allowance for all sorts of people and opinions. If he finds no out-of-the-way truths, he will identify himself with no very burning faslehood. His way takes him along a by-road, not much frequented, but very even and pleasant, which is called Commonplace Lane, and leads to the Belvedere of Common-sense. Thence he shall command an agreeble, if no very noble prospect; and while others behold the East and West, the Devil

and the Sunrise, he will be contentedly aware of a sort of morning hour upon all sublunary things, with an army of shadows running speedily and in many different directions into the great daylight of Eternity. The shadows and the generations, the shrill doctors and the plangent wars, go by into ultimate silence and emptiness; but underneath all this, a man may see, out of the Belvedere windows, much green and peaceful landscape; many firelit parlours; good people laughing, drinking, and making love as they did before the Flood or the French Revolution; and the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn.

Extreme *busyness*, whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity. There is a sort of dead-alive, hackneyed people about, who are scarcely conscious of living except in the exercise of some conventional occupation. Bring these fellows into the country or set them aboard ship, and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study. They have no curiosity; they cannot give themselves over to random provocations; they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake; and unless Necessity lays about them with a stick, they will even stand still. It is no good speaking to such folk: they *cannot be idle*, their nature is not generous enough; and they pass those hours in a sort of coma, which are not dedicated to furious moiling in the gold-mill. When they do not require to go to office, when they are not hungry and have no mind to drink, the whole breathing world is a blank to them. If they have to wait an hour or so for a train, they fall into a

stupid trance with their eyes open. To see them, you would suppose there was nothing to look at and no one to speak with ; you would imagine they were paralysed or alienated ; and yet very possibly they are hard workers in their own way, and have good eyesight for a flaw in a deed or a turn of the market. They have been to school and college, but all the time they had their eye on the medal ; they have gone about in the world and mixed with clever people, but all the time they were thinking of their own affairs. As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play ; until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another, while they wait for the train. Before he was breeched, he might have clambered on the boxes ; when he was twenty, he would have stared at the girls ; but now the pipe is smoked out, the snuff-box empty, and my gentleman sits bolt upright upon a bench, with lamentable eyes. This does not appeal to me as being Success in Life.

But it is not only the person himself who suffers from his busy habits, but his wife and children, his friends and relations, and down to the very people he sits with in a railway-carriage or an omnibus. Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business, is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things. And it is not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do. To an impartial estimate it will seem clear that many of the wisest, most virtuous and most beneficent parts that are to be played upon the Theatre of Life are filled by gratuitous performers,

and pass, among the world at large, as phases of idleness. For in that Theatre, not only the walking gentlemen, singing chambermaids, and diligent fiddlers in the orchestra, but those who look on and clap their hands from the benches, do really play a part and fulfil important offices towards the general result. You are no doubt very dependent on the care of your lawyer and stockbroker, of the guards and signalmen who convey you rapidly from place to place, and the policemen who walk the streets for your protection; but is there not a thought of gratitude in your heart for certain other benefactors who set you smiling when they fall in your way, or season your dinner with good company? Colonel Newcome helped to lose his friend's money; Fred Bayham had an ugly trick of borrowing shirts; and yet they were better people to fall among than Mr. Barnes. And though Falstaff was neither sober nor very honest, I think I could name one or two long-faced Barabbases whom the world could better have done without. Hazlitt mentions that he was more sensible of obligation to Northcote, who had never done him anything he could call a service, than to his whole circle of ostentatious friends; for he thought a good companion emphatically the greatest benefactor. I know there are people in the world who cannot feel grateful unless the favour has been done them at the cost of pain and difficulty. But this is a churlish disposition. A man may send you six sheets of letterpaper covered with the most entertaining gossip, or you may pass half-an-hour pleasantly, perhaps profitably, over an article of his; do you think the service would be greater if he had made the manuscript in his heart's blood, like a compact with the devil? Do you really fancy you

should be more beholden to your correspondent, if he had been damning you all the while for your importunity? Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest; but wherever there is an element of sacrifice, the favour is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion. There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. The other day, a ragged, bare-foot boy ran down the street after a marble, with so jolly an air that he set every one he passed into a good humour; one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usually black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money with this remark: 'You see what sometimes comes of looking pleased.' If he had looked pleased before, he had now to look both pleased and mystified. For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children: I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere but upon the stage: but I am prepared to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or waman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will: and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Liveableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without

remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept; but thanks to hunger and the work house, one not easily to be abused; and within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion; he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest, and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot; or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil feature in other people's lives. They would be happier if he were dead. They could easier do without his services in the Circumlocution Office, than they can tolerate his fractious spirits. He poisons life at the well-head. It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew, than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle.

And what, in God's name, is all this pother about? For what cause do they embitter their own and other people's lives? That a man should publish three or thirty articles a year, that he should finish or not finish his great allegorical picture, are questions of little interest to the world. The ranks of life are full; and although a thousand fall, there are always some to go into the breach. When they told Joan of Arc she should be at home minding women's work, she answered there were plenty to spin and wash. And so, even with your own rare gifts! When nature is 'so careless of the single life,' why

should we coddle ourselves into the fancy that our own is of exceptional importance? Suppose Shakespeare had been knocked on the head some dark night in Sir Thomas Lucy's preserves, the world would have wagged on better or worse, the pitcher gone to the well, the scythe to the corn, and the student to his book; and no one been any the wiser of the loss. There are not many works extant, if you look the alternative all over, which are worth the price of a pound of tobacco to a man of limited means. This is a sobering reflection for the proudest of our earthly vanities. Even a tobacconist may, upon consideration, find no great cause for personal vainglory in the phrase; for although tobacco is an admirable sedative, the qualities necessary for retailing it are neither rare nor precious in themselves. Alas and alas! you may take it how you will, but the services of no single individual are indispensable. Atlas was just a gentleman with a protracted nightmare! And yet you see merchants who go and labour themselves into a great fortune and thence into the bankruptcy court; scribblers who keep scribbling at little articles until their temper is a cross to all who come about them, as though Pharaoh should set the Israelites to make a pin instead of a pyramid; and fine young men who work themselves into a decline, and are driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it. Would you not suppose these persons had been whispered, by the Master of the Ceremonies, the promise of some momentous destiny? and that this lukewarm bullet on which they play their farces was the bull's eye and centre-point of all the universe? And yet it is not so. The ends for which they gave away their priceless youth, for all they know, may be chimerical or hurtful; the glory and riches they

expect may never come, or may find them indifferent; and they and the world they inhabit are so inconsiderable that the mind freezes at the thought.

XXIII

OUR INHERITANCE

HILAIRE BELLOC.

How noble is our inheritance. The more one thinks of it the more suffused with pleasure one's mind becomes; for the inheritance of a man living in this country is not one of this sort or of that sort, but of all sorts. It is, indeed, a necessary condition for the enjoyment of that inheritance that a man should be free, and we have really so muddled things that very many men in England are not free, for they have either to suffer a gross denial of mere opportunity—I mean they cannot even leave their town for any distance—or they are so persecuted by the insecurity of their lives that they have no room for looking at the world, but if an Englishman is free what an inheritance he has to enjoy!

It is the fashion of great nations to insist upon some part of their inheritance, their military memories, or their letters, or their religion, or some other thing. But in modern Europe, as it seems to me, three or four of the great nations can play upon many such titles to joy as upon an instrument. For a man in Italy, or England or France, or Spain, if he is weary of the manifold literature of his own country, can turn to its endurance under arms (in which respect, by the way, victory and defeat are of little account) or if he is weary of these military things, or thinks the too continued contemplation of them hurtful to the State (as it often is, for it goes

to the head like wine), he can consider the great minds which his nation has produced, and which give glory to his nation not so much because they are great as because they are national. Then, again, he can consider the landscapes of his own land, whether peaceably, as do older men, or in a riot of enthusiasm as do all younger men who see England in the midst of exercising their bodies, as it says in the Song of the Man who Bicycled :

"...and her distance and her sea.
Here is wealth that has no measure,
All wide England is my treasure
Park and Close and private pleasure
All her hills were made for me."

Then he can poke about the cities, and any one of them might occupy him almost for a lifetime. Hereford, for instance. I know of nothing in Europe like the Norman work of Hereford or Ludlow, where you will perpetually find new things, or Leominster just below, or Ledbury just below that again ; and the inn at each of these three places is called The Feathers.

Then a man may be pleased to consider the recorded history of this country, and to inform the fields he knows with the past and with the actions of men long dead. In this way he can use a battlefield with no danger of any detestable insolence or vulgar civilian ways, for the interest in a battlefield, if it is closely studied, becomes so keen and hot that it burns away all foolish violence, and you will soon find if you study this sort of terrain closely that you forget on which side your sympathies fail or succeed : an excellent corrective if, as it should be with healthy men, your sympathies too often warp

evidence and blind you. On this account also one should always suspect the accuracy of military history when it betrays sneering or crowing, because, in the first place, that is a very unmilitary way of looking at battles, and, in the second place, it argues that the historian has not properly gone into all his details. If he had he would have been much too interested in such questions as the measurement of ranges, or, latterly, the presence and nature of cover to bother about crowing or sneering.

When a man tires of these there is left to him the music of his country, by which I mean the tunes. These he can sing to himself as he goes along, and if ever he tires of that there is the victuals and the drink, which, if he has travelled, he may compare to their advantage over those of any other land. But they must be national. Let him take no pleasure in things cooked in a foreign way. There was a man some time ago, in attempting to discover whose name I have spent too much energy, who wrote a most admirable essay upon cold beef and pickles, remarking that these two elements of English life are retreating as it were into the strongholds where England is still holding out against the dirty cosmopolitan mud which threatens every country to-day. He traced the retreat of cold beef and pickles eastward towards the City from the West End all along Piccadilly and the Strand right into Fleet Street, where, he said, they were keeping their positions manfully. They stand also isolated and besieged in one hundred happy English country towns. . . . . .

The trouble about writing an article like this is that one wanders about: it is also the pleasure of it. The limits or trammels to an article like this are

that, by a recent and very dangerous superstition, the printed truth is punishable at law, and all one's memories of a thousand places upon the Icknield Way, the Stane Street, the Pilgrim's Way, the Rivers Ouse (all three of them), the Cornish Road, the Black Mountain, Ferry Side, the Three Rivers, all the Pennines, all the Cheviots, all the Cotswolds, all the Mendips, all the Chilterns, all the Malvern Hills, and all the Downs—to speak of but a few—must be memories of praise—by order of the Court. One may not blame: therefore I say nothing of Northwich.

. . . .

Some men say that whereas wealth can be accumulated and left to others when we die, this sort of inheritance cannot, and that the great pleasure a man took in his own land and the very many ways in which he found that pleasure and his increase in that pleasure as his life proceeded, all die with him. This you will very often hear deplored. As noble a woman as ever lived in London used to say, speaking of her father (and she also is dead), that all she valued in him died with him, although he had left her a considerable fortune. By which she meant that not only in losing him she had lost a rooted human affection and had suffered what all must suffer, because there is a doom upon us, but that those particular things in which he was particularly favoured had gone away for ever. His power over other languages and over his own language, his vast knowledge of his own country, his acquired courtesy and humour, all mellowed by the world and time, these she said, were altogether gone. And to us of a younger generation it was her work to lament that

we should never know what had once been in England. Among others she vastly admired the first Duke of Wellington, and said that he was tall—which was absurd. Now this noble woman, it seems to me, was in error, for all of us who have loved and enjoyed know not only that we carry something with us elsewhere (as we are bound to believe), but leave also in some manner which I do not clearly perceive a legacy to our own people. We take with us that of which Peter Wanderwide spoke when he said or rather sang these lines—

> "If all that I have loved and seen
> Be with me on the Judgment Day,
> I shall be saved the crowd between
> From Satan and his foul array."

We carry it with us. And though it is not a virtue it is half a virtue, and when we go down in the grave like the character in *Everyman*, there will go down with us, I think, not only Good Deeds, a severe female, but also a merry little hobbling comrade who winks and grins and keeps just behind her so that he shall not be noticed and driven away. This little fellow will also speak for us, I think, and he is the Pleasure we took in this jolly world.

But I say that not only do we carry something with us, but that we leave something also ; and this has been best put, I think, by the poet Ronsard when he was dying, who said, if I have rightly translated him, this—

"Of all those vanities" (he is speaking of the things of this world), "the loveliest and most praiseworthy is glory—fame. No one of my time has been

so filled with it as I ; I have lived in it and loved and triumphed in it through time past, and now I leave it to my country to garner and possess it after I shall die. So do I go away from my own place as satiated with the glory of this world as I am hungry and all longing for that of God."

That is very good. It would be very difficult to put it better, and if you complain that here Ronsard was only talking of fame or glory, why, I can tell you that the pleasure one takes in one's country is of the same stuff as fame. So true is this that the two commonly go together, and that those become most glorious who have most enjoyed their own land

XXIV

ON A SOUTHERN HARBOUR

HILAIRE BELLOC

The ship had sailed northward in an even manner and under a sky that was full of stars, when the dawn broke and the full day quickly broadened over the Mediterranean. With the advent of the light the salt of the sea seemed stronger, and there certainly arose a new freshness in the following air; but as yet no land appeared. Until at last, seated as I was alone in the fore part of the vessel, I clearly saw a small unchanging shape far off before me, peaked upon the horizon and grey like a cloud. This I watched, wondering what its name might be, who lived upon it, or what its fame was; for it was certainly land.

I watched in this manner for some hours—perhaps for two—when the island, now grown higher, was so near that I could see trees upon it: but they were set sparsely, as trees are on a dry land, and most of them seemed to be thorn trees.

It was at this moment that a man who had been singing to himself in a low tone aft came up to me and told me that this island was called the Island of Goats and that there were no men upon it to his knowledge, that it was a lonely place and worth little. But by this time there had risen beyond the Island of Goats another and much larger land.

It lay all along the north in a mountainous belt of blue, and any man coming to it for the first time or unacquainted with maps would have said to him-

self: I have found a considerable place." And, indeed, the name of the island indicates this, for it is called Majorca, "The Larger Land." Towards this, past the Island of Goats, and past the Strait, we continued to sail with a light breeze for hours, until at last we could see on this shore also sparse trees, but most of them were olive trees, and they were relieved with the green of cultivation up the high mountain sides and with the white houses of men.

The deck was now crowded with people, most of whom were coming back to their own country after an exile in Africa among un-Christian and dangerous things. The little children who had not yet known Europe, having been born beyond the sea, were full of wonder; but their parents, who knew the shortness of human life and its trouble, were happy because they had come back at last and saw before them the known jetties and the familiar hills of home. As I was surrounded by so much happiness, I myself felt as though I had come to the end of a long journey and was reaching my own place, though I was, in reality, bound for Barcelona, and after that up northward through the Cerdagne, and after that to Perigord, and after that to the Channel, and so to Sussex, where all journeys end.

The harbour had about it that Mediterranean-go-as-you-please which everywhere in the Mediterranean distinguishes harbours. It was as though the men of that sea had said: "It never blows for long: let us build ourselves a rough refuge and to-morrow sail away." We neared this harbour, but we flew no flag and made no signal. Beneath us the water was so clear that all one need have done to have brought the vessel in if one had not known the channel would

have been to lean over the side and to keep the boy at the helm off the very evident shallows and the crusted rocks by gestures of one's hands, for the fairway was like a trench, deep and blue. So we slid into Palma haven, and as we rounded the pier the light wind took us first abeam and then forward; then we let go and she swung up and was still. They lowered the sails.

The people who were returning were so full of activity and joy that it was like a hive of bees; but I no longer felt this as I had felt their earlier and more subdued emotion, for the place was no longer distant or mysterious, as it had been when first its sons and daughters had come up on deck to welcome it and had given me part of their delight. It was now an evident and noisy town; hot, violent, and strong. The houses had about them a certain splendour, the citizens upon the quays a satisfied and prosperous look. Its streets, where they ran down towards the sea, were charmingly clean and cared for, and the architecture of its wealthier mansions seemed to me at once unusual and beautiful, for I had not yet seen Spain. Each house, so far as I could make out from the water, was entered by a fine sculptured porch which gave into a cool courtyard with archades under it, and most for the larger houses had escutcheons carved in stone upon their walls.

But what most pleased me and also seemed most strange was to see against the East a vast cathedral quite Northern in outline, except for a severity and discipline of which the North is incapable save when it has steeped itself in the terseness of the classics.

This monument was far larger than anything in the town. It stood out separate from the town and

dominated it upon its seaward side, somewhat as might an isolated hill, a shore fortress of rock. It was almost bare of ornament; its stones were very carefully worked and closely fitted, and little waves broke ceaselessly along the base of its rampart. Landwards, a mass of low houses which seemed to touch the body of the building did but emphasise its height. When I had landed I made at once for this cathedral, and with every step it grew greater.

We who are of the North are accustomed to the enormous; we have unearthly sunsets and the clouds magnify our hills. The Southern men see nothing but misproportion in what is enormous. They love to have things in order, and violence in art is odious to them. This high and dreadful roof had not been raised under the influences of the island; it had surely been designed just after the re-conquest from the Mohammedans, when a turbulent army, not only of Gascons and Catalans, but of Normans also and of Frisians and of Rhenish men, had poured across the water and had stormed the sea-walls. On this account the cathedral had about it, in its sky-line and in its immensity and in the Gothic point of its windows a Northern air. But in its austerity and in its magnificence it was Spaniard.

As I passed the little porch of entry in the side wall I saw a man. He was standing silent and alone; he was not blind and perhaps not poor, and as I passed he begged the charity not of money but of prayers. When I had entered the cool and darkness of the nave, his figure still remained in my mind, and I could not forget it. I remembered the straw hat upon his head and the suit of blue canvas which he wore, and the rough staff of wood in his hand. I was especially haunted by his expression, which

was patient and masqued as though he were enduring a pain and chose to hide it.

The nave was empty. It was a great hollow that echoed and re-echoed; there were no shrines and no lamps, and no men or women praying, and therefore the figure at the door filled my mind more and more, until I went out and asked him if he was in need of money, of which at that moment I had none. He answered that his need was not for money but only for prayers.

"Why," said I, "do you need prayers?"

He said it was because his fate was upon him.

I think he spoke the truth. He was standing erect and with dignity, his eyes were not disturbed, and he repeatedly refused the alms of passers-by.

"No one," said I, "should yield to these moods."

He answered nothing, but looked pensive like a man gazing at a landscape and remembering his life.

But it was now the hour when the ship was to be sailing again, and I could not linger, though I wished very much to talk more with him. I begged him to name a shrine where a gift might be of especial value to him. He said that he was attached to no one shrine more than to any other, and then I went away regretfully, remembering how earnestly he had asked for prayers.

This was in Palma of Majorca not two years ago. There are many such men, but few who speak so humbly.

When I had got aboard again the ship sailed out and rounded a lighthouse point and then made north to Barcelona. The night fell, and next morning there rose before us the winged figures that crown the Custom House of that port and are an introduction to the glories of Spain.

XXV

THE HABIT OF READING

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL

"All habits are bad." So declared an unknown aphorist, and though a grain of truth may often be discovered lurking in a magnum of error, it is perhaps as well that the name of this dogmatic gentleman should not be known, for his aphorism flies in the face—as is, indeed, very much the habit of these sayings—of another and a more famous aphorism that declares "Habit to be a second nature." Beware of paradoxes! They tickle. But so do straws. Truths never tickle. "All habits are bad" is a paradoxical saying, "Habit is a second nature" a true one.

That some habits are bad must be admitted—drug-taking, for example. And as it is not easy to distinguish generally between good habits and bad ones, I at once boldly ask this question—is it wise or foolish for a young fellow, anxious "to cleanse his way," to set about forming the fixed habit of reading?

Is it not possible—though hardly probable—that having once formed this habit of reading it may so grow upon its victim as to bring down the full weight of the dread Miltonic censure, for which room had to be found in the almost-inspired pages of *Paradise Regained*:

> Many books
> Wise men have said are wearisom; who reads
> Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
> A spirit and a judgment equal or superior

(And what he brings, what need he elsewhere seek —

Uncertain and unsettl'd still remains

Deep verst in books and shallow in himself

Really this sublime Milton of ours goes too far in this parenthesis of his, "*And what he brings, what need he elsewhere seek,*" for was not this Lord Foppington's excuse for never reading anything at all, being well satisfied, so he declared, with the sprouts of his own brain?—and yet, I am sure, Milton would never have tolerated his lordship for two minutes.

Happily, however, there is no need for me to dive into this controversy, for I have nothing else on my mind but to urge upon my juniors in their laudable pursuit of pleasure, and with a view to the possible length of their days, early to form the habit—and it is a habit as much as smoking a pipe—of reading all sorts of books, long books and short ones, poetry and prose, novels old as well as new, biographies, histories, science, what you will! I say nothing against bridge or any other game of cards. Billiards is a noble pursuit. Before a chessboard I uncover as in the presence of royalty. To dominoes I was once much addicted, though now I play no more, death having robbed me of my rival. Whilst as for the sports of the field they need no advocacy. All these habits are easily formed and seldom willingly abandoned. It is hardly so with the habit of reading, for, strange to say, even when once acquired it is easily lost. How many men turned forty read anything save their newspaper! Once they may have had the habit, but, if so, they have lost it. What a melancholy picture is that of an aged and once literate statesman—on the retired list—wandering up and

down his magnificent library, muttering miserably to himself, "I can no longer read."

First, then, my advice is—form the habit of reading, and, having formed it, stick to it. All habits are not bad, and some are of the very salt of life. What a glimpse into the dark abyss of melancholia is afforded by that chance remark of Balzac's in *Le Cousin Pons*, "Many a man on the brink of suicide has been plucked back on the threshold of death by the thought of the *cafe* where he plays his nightly game of dominoes." What a cheerful, friendly, life-sustaining habit! How right I was to be fond of dominoes! Yet regarding life as a whole, as something to be endured and if possible enjoyed, from its beginning to its may be solitary end, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *The Three Musketeers*, from *The Three Musketeers* to *War and Peace*, I am certain that there is no greater gift of fortune than to have acquired and retained the power to "go back to one's book" with eagerness and joy.

How is this habit to be acquired?

The first step is to breed an easy familiarity with the outsides of books, and to feel comfortable in their company as an ostler amongst horses.

How is this familiarity to be obtained?

The run of a large library is almost essential, and in these days, when really fine libraries are to be found in all quarters of the town, this is not very difficult. To get to know the books as they stand on their shelves is a pleasant increase of one's acquaintances. That is Walpole in Peter Cunningham's nine volumes, there is Gibbon in twelve (for he cannot be read in less). That long, dusty series must be *The Annual Register*. There surely is Boswell in Dr.

Hill's six volumes, and Johnson's own works in either nine or twelve. How many volumes does Fielding occupy, how many Richardson, and how many Sterne? These, believe me, are not foolish questions. As the Alpine expert can pick out his peaks from the terrace at Berne, so the book-lover, on entering a library, even a municipal library, finds himself at home.

The book-reader, as he grows in maturity, is not likely to be altogether content with municipal libraries, but it is not given to many of us to possess thirty thousand volumes, and most of us find it difficult to stow away even five thousand in the home for heroes where we are condemned to live. But the familiarity of which I have been writing, though only to be gained from access to large libraries, and the study of second-hand booksellers' catalogues and the run of their shops, in no way leads to discontent with the few volumes we happen to possess of our very own. No sensible man envies the Bodleian, or wishes that the catalogue of his library should be in a hundred volumes.

To repeat my point, the habit of reading, if it is to become so confirmed as to bid defiance to the crust of middle age, is best fostered and stimulated by cultivating in as many ways as possible an extreme familiarity with both the outsides and the title-pages of good books. I have known men of university breeding who are positively as uneasy in the presence of a book as Mr. Gladstone used to be in the company of a Nonconformist minister of religion. I am not blaming them, for they may possess other and equally enduring tastes, but I am only concerned to make out that amongst men's habits, the habit of

reading, if persisted in to the end, is one of the most pleasure-giving, and is—probably—the most lasting.

The next step to take, after establishing a certain measure of easy familiarity with books as *things*, like the ace of clubs or the king of diamonds, is to gratify your natural tastes by setting yourself more or less diligently and day by day to read what you like best. Never force your taste, but feed it. Even reading what you like best after such a fashion as to form an enduring habit demands an effort of the will and an occasional forced discipline. It is easy to lay down a book half read and to forget to take it up again, and this is all the easier when there is no particular occasion ever to take it up again, for I am not thinking of any such pursuit as "reading for an examination," but of reading for the pleasure of reading and nothing else.

It is amazing how this habit of reading for pleasure slips clean out of people's lives. It often seems completely forgotten. The books may be on the shelves, but they are seldom taken down, and they remain unexercised. Sometimes they are not on the shelves at all, and then what a cruel fate it is for any child to be born within those bookless walls.

How shocking it would have been to come into a house which did not contain *The Essays of Elia*, or the novels of Scott and Dickens! Yet even as it is, when cheap and excellent reprints abound and household libraries are enormously improved, the habit of reading for pleasure is by no means general.

This habit once formed, and so formed as to become "a second nature," secures that the path through life, however narrow and stony and unromantic in its surroundings, often becomes pleasant and at times exciting. The bank clerk with a good

book awaiting him in his rooms walks home after dining in Soho with a light step and shuts the door behind him with a bang. Has he not *Phineas Finn* to finish? Or is he not in the middle of Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion*? One good book leads to another, and opens out new vistas of endless enjoyment. Is it not worth while to learn French in order to read Dumas, Balzac, and Anatole France, to say nothing of hundreds of other delightful French books in every branch of human intelligence?

It never does to ride a hobby too hard. An overdrawn banking account, a solitary hearthstone, a silenced, childish voice on the staircase—these are things not to be robbed of their sting by all the best books in the universe. The love of reading is no dope or drug to buy oblivion or to shut down the fountain of tears, but even in grief it may hold out a helping hand, and, as we put it, roughly but not unfeelingly, "pull us through" our troubles.

Why, then, should we neglect this source of comfort and enjoyment? By never forming this habit, or by allowing it to die down at forty and drop out of life, we are exposing ourselves unnecessarily to hours of boredom, *ennui,* and depression. As we grow older it is not much that life has to offer us. "My grief lies onward and my joy behind," is one of the many sad lines in Shakespeare's sonnets, but it is one most of us are forced to repeat every day, either with a grim smile or a barely concealed tear.

A reading man can always find something to read, for even good books in your own line are often mysteriously overlooked for years. You knew about them, but, somehow, you had never read them. I have just finished reading for the first time one of

the most interesting of English biographies in two stout volumes. I have been long familiar with their outsides in libraries and bookshops, but until the other day, when I bought a copy coming from the library of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, I had never held them in my hands. I am referring to the well-known life of Sir Joshua Reynolds, by Leslie, R. A., and Tom Taylor, published in 1865. The book covers familiar ground, and told me over again some of the best-known stories of the England of the eighteenth century—stories of Johnson and Burke and Gibbon, of Goldsmith, of Garrick and Wilkes, etc. But in the background of the picture was the figure of the mild but pleasure-loving painter, the most 'invulnerable' of men, and all the old stories gathered a new lustre. What a record it is of a painter's life! What a list of great pictures, and of generations of fair women both as children and as mothers! Sir Joshua's sitters—his soldiers, his sailors, his poets, his actors, his statesmen, his fair and frail beauties, are by themselves a dictionary of national biography. Then his dinner-parties! It would be a pleasant employment for two or three evenings to go through the two volumes and make out a list of his dinner-parties, and of the men and women with whom he sat at meat—the best company that ever met in England.

I don't know that I have ever enjoyed a book more, which is a good deal for a septuagenarian to admit.

And now, having formed this habit of reading, how is it to be retained past middle age when we are so apt, like Eton boys, "to grow heavy"? Herein I fear the patient must minister to himself, yet it may be worth while inquiring why we should run

this risk in the middle passage of our lives. What is the philosophy of it? Why should there be this deadening of the soul? Perhaps only a poet can tell us. Listen then to Matthew Arnold:

Dear saints, it is not sorrow as I hear,
Nor suffering that shuts up eye and ear
To all which has delighted them before,
And let us be what we were once no more
No! we may suffer deeply, yet retain
Power to be moved and soothed for all our pain
By what of old pleased us, and will again.
No! 'Tis the gradual furnace of the world,
In whose hot air our spirits are unfurl'd
Until they crumble, or else grow like steel,
Which kills in us the bloom, the youth, the spring,
Which leaves the fierce necessity to feel
But takes away the power—this can avail
By drying up our joy in everything,
To make our former pleasures all seem stale.

XXVI

ON BORES.

A. G. GARDINER

I was talking in the smoking-room of a club with a man of somewhat blunt manner when Blossom came up, clapped him on the shoulder, and began: "Well, I think America is bound to——" "Now, do you mind giving us two minutes?" broke in the other, with harsh emphasis. Blossom, unabashed and unperturbed, moved off to try his opening on another group. Poor Blossom! I had almost said "Dear Blossom." For he is really an excellent fellow. The only thing that is the matter with Blossom is that he is a bore. He has every virtue except the virtue of being desirable company. You feel that you could love Blossom if he would only keep away. If you heard of his death you would be genuinely grieved and would send a wreath to his grave and a nice letter of condolence to his wife and numerous children.

But it is only absence that makes the heart grow fond of Blossom. When he appears all your affection for him withers. You hope that he will not see you. You shrink to your smallest dimensions. You talk with an air of intense privacy. You keep your face averted. You wonder whether the back of your head is easily distinguishable among so many heads. All in vain. He approacheth with the remorselessness of fate. He putteth his hand upon your shoulder. He remarketh with the air of one that

bringeth new news and good news — "Well, I think that America is bound to —— " And then he taketh a chair and thou lookest at the clock and wonderest how soon thou canst decently remember another engagement.

Blossom is the bore courageous. He descends on the choicest company without fear or parley. Out, sword, and at 'em, is his motto. He advances with a firm voice and a confident air, as of one who knows he is welcome everywhere and has only to choose his company. He will have nothing but the best, and as he enters the room you may see his eye roving from table to table, not in search of the glad eye of recognition, but of the most select companionship, and having marked down his prey he goes forward boldly to the attack, salutes the circle with easy familiarity, draws up his chair with assured and masterful authority, and plunges into the stream of talk with the heavy impact of a walrus or hippopotamus taking a bath. The company around him melts away, but he is not dismayed. Left alone with a circle of empty chairs, he riseth like a giant refreshed, casteth his eye abroad, noteth another group that whetteth his appetite for good fellowship, moveth towards it with bold and resolute front. You may see him put to flight as many as three circles inside an hour, and retire at the end, not because he is beaten, but because there is nothing left worth crossing swords with. "A very good club to-night," he says to Mrs. B. as he puts on his slippers.

Not so Trip. He is the bore circumspect. He proceeds by sap and mine where Blossom charges the battlements sword in hand. He enters timidly as one who hopes that he will be unobserved. He goes

to the table and examines the newspapers, takes one and seats himself alone. But not so much alone that he is entirely out of the range of those fellows in the corner who keep up such a cut-and-thrust of wit. Perchance one of them may catch his eye and open the circle to him. He readeth his paper sedulously, but his glance passeth incontinently outside the margin or over the top of the page to the coveted group. No responsive eye meets his. He moveth just a thought nearer along the sofa by the wall. Now he is well within hearing. Now he is almost of the company itself. But still unseen—noticeably unseen. He puts down his paper, not ostentatiously but furtively. He listens openly to the conversation, as one who has been enmeshed in it unconsciously, accidentally, almost unwillingly for was he not absorbed in his paper until this conversation disturbed him? And now it would be almost uncivil not to listen. He waits for a convenient opening and then gently insinuates a remark like one venturing on untried ice. And the ice breaks, and the circle melts. For Trip, too, is a bore.

I remember in those wonderful submarine pictures of the brothers Williamson, which we saw in London some time ago, a strange fish at whose approach all the other fish turned tail. It was not, I think, that they feared him, nor that he was less presentable in appearance than any other fish, but simply that there was something about him that made them remember things. I forget what his name was, or whether he even had a name. But his calling was obvious. He was the Club Bore. He was the fish who sent the other fish about their business. I thought of Blossom as I saw that lonely creature whisking through the water in search of some friendly ear into which he

could remark—"Well, I think that America is bound to—" or words to that effect. I thought how superior an animal is man. He doth not hastily flee from the bore as these fish did. He hath bowels of compassion. He tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb. He looketh at the clock, he beareth his agony a space, he seemeth even to welcome Blossom, he stealeth away with delicate solicitude for his feelings.

It is a hard fate to be sociable and yet not to have the gift of sociability. It is a small quality that is lacking. Good company insists on one sauce. It must have humour. Anything else may be lacking, but this is the salt that gives savour to all the rest. And the humour must not be that counterfeit currency which consists in the retailing of borrowed stories. "Of all bores whom man in his folly hesitates to hang, and Heaven in its mysterious wisdom suffers to propagate its species," says De Quincey, "the most insufferable is the teller of good stories." It is an over-hard saying, subject to exceptions; but it contains the essential truth, for the humour of good company must be an authentic emanation of personality and not a borrowed tale. It is no discredit to be a bore. Very great men have been bores! I fancy that Macaulay, with all his transcendent gifts, was a bore. My head aches even at the thought of an evening spent in the midst of the terrific torrent of facts and certainties that poured from that brilliant and amiable man. I find myself in agreement for once with Melborne who wished that he was "as cocksure of one thing as Macaulay was of everything." There is pretty clear evidence that Wordsworth was a bore and that Coleridge was a bore, and I am sure Bob Southey must have been an intolerable bore. And Necker's daughter was

fortunate to escape Gibbon, for he was assuredly a prince of bores. He took pains to leave posterity in no doubt on the point. He wrote his *Autobiography* which, as a wit observed, showed that "he did not know the difference between himself and the Roman Empire. He has related his 'progressions from London to Bariton and from Bariton to London' in the same monotonous, majestic periods that he recorded the fall of states and empires." Yes, an indubitable bore. Yet these were all admirable men and even great men. Let not therefore the Blossoms and the Trips be discomfited. It may be that it is not they who are not fit company for us, but we who are not fit company for them.

XXVII

"*MY COUSIN, THE BOOKBINDER*"

E. V. LUCAS

"*Oh, I am so poorly! I waked it at my cousin's, the bookbinder, who is now with God.*"—CHARLES LAMB, *to P. G Patmore*, 1827

"So you've been reading that, sir, have you: I have a copy too, I'll fetch it and show you. . . . The inscription? Oh, yes that's all right. He's my cousin, true enough: his real name's not Elia, of course; his real name's Lamb—Charles Lamb. He's a clerk at the East India Company's in Leadenhall Street—a little dark man with a large head. Must be nearly fifty by this time.

"'Genius,' you say? Well, I've heard others say that too—one or two persons, that is: customers of mine; but I don't know. Perhaps I'm no judge of such things. I'm a bookbinder. The outside of books is my line, not the inside. Oh yes, I've read Elia's Essays—not all through, perhaps, but here and there. Quite enough to tell, anyway.

"'Genius,' you say? My idea of genius is not that. I like a straightforward thing. Did you ever read the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, by Thomas Gray? Now, there's genius. So beautifully it goes—never a trip to the tongue from beginning to end, and everything so clear a child could understand it, and yet it's literature too. My little girl used to say it. *Rasselas*, too—do you know that? The Happy

Valley and all the rest of it. That's genius, I think. But not this twisted stuff going backwards and forwards and one never feeling quite sure how to take it. I like a plain man with a plain mind.

"It's just the same with my cousin when you meet him. You never know what he's at. He's so nice sometimes, all heart, and friendly—and then the next time I have a notion that everything he says means something else. He leads me on to talk—just as I am talking now to you, sir,—and he seems to agree with what I say so warmly; and then all of a sudden I see that he's just making fun of me all the time. He must have his joke. He comes in here sometimes on his way from the office, and precious little he does there, I can tell you. Oh, they're an easy lot, those East India clerks.

"But with all his odd ways and that mischievous mouth of his, his heart's in the right place. Very different from his brother, who died a year or so back. He was nothing to boast of; but the airs that man used to put on! I remember his father well—a little brisk man, wonderfully like Garrick, full of jokes and bright, quick ways. He was really a scrivener, but he didn't do much of that in those days, having fallen into an easy place with old Mr. Salt, the Member of Parliament, and a great man in the law. This Mr. Salt lived in the Temple, and little John Lamb—that is your Elia's father—he was his servant: did everything for him and lived in clover. Mrs. Lamb, she cooked. Mr. Salt was the generous kind—sent the boys to school and all the rest of it. They had it all their own way till the old gentleman died, and then things went wrong one after the other. It's too sad to talk about. . . . .

"Except that Mrs. Lamb and her husband's

sister, Miss Sarah—'Aunt Hetty' they used to call her never quite hit it off, it was as happy a family as you'd ask for. But there came terrible times. . . . It's too sad . . . Where was I?—Oh yes, so you see that Mr. John Lamb, Esquire, who died the other day, had little enough to boast of, but he walked about as if he owned the earth. He used to come in here now and then to give me an order, and he threw it to me as if it was a bone and I was a dog. Many's the time I had it on my tongue to remind him what his father was, but I kept it back. A word unsaid is still to say. He was at the South Sea House, near his brother in Leadenhall Street, but they didn't have much to do with each other. Mr. John, he was a big blustering, happy man, while this little one who calls himself Elia is all for quietness and not being seen, and having his own thoughts and his own jokes. They hadn't much in common...

"Besides, there was another thing. There's a sister, you must know, sir, a wonderful wise woman, but she's not always quite right in her head, poor dear; and when it was a question of whether some-one had to promise to be responsible for her, or she must go into an asylum for the rest of her life, her younger brother, the writer of that book there, under your arm, said *he* would; and he gave up every-thing, and has kept her—it was thirty years ago very nearly—ever since. Well, it was thought in the family and by their friends that John, who was a grown man at the time, and a bachelor too, and beginning to be prosperous, ought to have done more than he did, and I think that sometimes he thought so too, although he was usually pretty well satisfied with himself. Anyway, he didn't go to see his brother and sister much, and when he did I've heard

that there was often trouble, because he would have his own way and argufy until he lost his temper. I was told as how he once had a dispute with Mr. Hazlitt the writer over something to do with painting, and knocked him down. Just think of knocking a man down about a matter of paint! But your high-handed men will quarrel over anything.

"Like his little brother he tried writing too, but he couldn't do it. He wrote a little tract on kindness to animals, and brought it here to be bound in morocco. Not to give away, mind, but to keep. 'Author's Copy' I had to letter it . . . . 'Kindness to animals,' I nearly said him; 'what about kindness to sisters?' But I didn't say it.

"The sister? Ah, yes, she's the prick. She's a great woman, if ever there was one. I know her better than any of them, because when they were living near here, and her brother—your Mr. Lamb, the author—was at his office, I often looked in with a pork chop or some little thing like that. There's no jokes about her; no saying things that she doesn't mean, or anything like that. She's all gold, my cousin Mary is. She understands everything, too. I've taken lots of troubles to her—little difficulties about my children, and what not—and she understands directly, for all she's an old maid, and tells me just what I want to know. She's the clever one. She can write too. I've got a little book of her stories and some poetry for children– here they are —I bound them myself: that's the best binding I can do—real russia, and hand tooling, every bit of it. Did she write all of them? No, she didn't write all, but she wrote the best. Her brother Charles did something to each, but I don't mind that. I think of them as her books, Mary's. If only she had

better health, she would write much better than he does ; but her poor head. . . . Every year, you must know, she goes out of her mind for a little while. Oh, it's too sad. . . .

"Have they many friends? Oh yes, a good many. Most of them are too clever for me; but there are some old-fashioned ones too, that they like for old sakes' sake. They're the best. One or two of them are very good customers of mine. There's Mr. Robinson, the barrister, he brings me lots of books to mend, and I've had work for Mr. Aders, too. But as for your Mr. Lamb,—Elia,– never a stitch will he let you put into any book, even if it's dropping to pieces. Why, he won't even take the dealer's tickets off them. He never thinks of the outside of a book, but you should see him tearing the heart out of them by the light of one candle. I'm told he knows more about what books are worth reading than anyone living. That's odd, isn't it, and his father a little serving-man! Life's full of surprises. They say he knows all about poetry, too, and helped the great poets. There's Mr. Wordsworth, why, he dedicated a book to my cousin, I've got it here, *The Waggoner*, a pretty book it is, too,—and Mr Coleridge, who wrote about the old sailor man and the albatross, he let my cousin put some little poems of his own into one of his books. It turns one inside out when one thinks of this, and then of the old days and his father powdering Mr. Salt's wig. But I suppose everyone's father had to work once. Still, it's funnier when one belongs to the same family.

"Now I come to remember it, his father used to write a little too-free and easy pieces for a charitable society he belonged to, and so on. It's

odd how writing runs in a family. But there won't be any more Lambs to write—John left no children, only a stepdaughter, and Charles and Mary are single. This is the end. Well. . . . .

"Yes, they've moved from London now. They're living in Islington. They used to live in the Temple for years, and then they went to Covent Garden, over a tinman's. Miss Lamb liked that better than the Temple, but her brother liked the Temple best. It gave her more to do, poor dear, during the day, because her sitting-room window looked over Bow Street, and she could see all that was going on. I'm afraid Islington is very dull after that. She could see the two great theatres, too, and they both love the play.

"He wrote a farce once. I went to see it. Nearly twenty years ago, at the Lane, when Elliston had it. We had orders for the pit, my wife and I, and the house was full of clerks from the South Sea House and the East India House. But it wouldn't do. *Mr. H.* it was called, and the whole joke was about the man's full name. But it wouldn't do. No one really minds names, and his wasn't so monstrously bad—only Hogsflesh, when all was said and done. All the friends did what we could for it, and the gentlemen from the great offices cheered and clapped, but the Noes got it. I never heard such hissing. I climbed up on the seat to see how poor Miss Lamb and her brother were taking it,—they were right in front, just by the orchestra,—and there was he, hissing away louder than anyone. Think of it, hissing his own play! It's one of the best jokes I ever heard. But she, poor dear, she was just crying.

"No, he never tried the stage again, not to my

knowledge. But I always say it wasn't a bad little play. If he'd only have let his sister touch it up, it would have been all right. She would have told him that Hogsflesh wasn't a good enough joke. She knows. . . .

"I went up to Islington to see them only last week, but he was out. A nice little cottage, but very quiet for her. Nothing to see but the houses over the way, and the New River, and the boys fishing for sticklebacks all day long. The river's absolutely in front of the house: nothing between you and it. Have you ever heard of Mr. Dyer, the writer? An old man, nearly blind. Well, he was coming away from my cousin's one day last year, and he walked bang into the water before anyone could stop him. Plump in. It's a wonder he wasn't drowned. There was an account of it in the *London Magazine* for December; for my cousin's a terrible man to serve up his friends and have jokes against them. He writes about everything just as it happens. I'm always expecting he'll have me in one of his essays. In fact, to tell you a secret, sir, that's why I read them. But I don't think he's got me yet.

"Yes, Islington's very different from Covent Garden, and the Temple too; for though the Temple is quiet enough, you've only got to pop into Fleet Street to be in the thick of everything. When they lived there she used to like doing her shopping in Fetter Lane, because it was at the top of the lane that she used to go to school years and years ago. For she's getting to be an old woman, you know. Let me see, how old is she?—Why, let's see, when was Marry born? It must have been 1763; no, it was 1764. Why, she'll be sixty this year.

"What does she do all day? Well, she reads a

great deal, stories for the most part. And she sews. She's very good with her needle. And then she has her thoughts. And at night they play cards. He gets back pretty soon, you know. Those East India gentlemen they don't do too much, I can tell you, and I'm told he's one of the laziest. Always either talking or writing letters, I hear. There's a good story of him down there. One of the superiors met him coming in at about half-past ten, and he said to him, sharp-like, 'Mr. Lamb,' he said, 'you come very late' And what do you think my cousin said, the impudent little fellow? 'Yes,' he said, as cool as you like, 'yes,' he said, 'but see how early I go,' he said. I can't say it as he did, because he stammers and stutters and I'm no mimic: but the brass of it shut the gentleman up. My cousin told me himself. He likes to tell you his good things; but I can't understand a lot of them. Every one has a different idea of what's funny. I'm with him, though, about old Munden: I could laugh at him all night.

"I'm troubled about them up there, so far from London and the theatres and the noise. It's a mistake to give up so much all at once. And they've given up their regular evenings, too, when people came in to play cards and talk. You can't ask busy folk to go to Islington.

"My cousin told me some bad news last week. She says that your Mr. Lamb,—Elia,—although he has such an easy time and a large salary, wants to leave the East India House and do nothing. I hope they won't let him. I know enough of life and of him to see what a mistake it would be. It was a mistake to go to Islington: it will be a worse mistake to retire. He says he wants to live in the country;

but he doesn't really. Authors don't know what they want. I always say that every author ought to have a bookbinder to advise him.

"She knows it's all wrong, poor dear, but what can she do? He worries so. She sees him all miserable, and after she's said all she can against his plans, she agrees with them. That's like good women. When they see that what must be must be, they do their best. But it is very sad. . . . It's her I'm so sorry for. He's the kind of man that ought to go to business every day.

"Well, sir, good night to you. I hope I havn't, been tedious with all my talk.

"No, sir, not quite a genius; but very clever I grant you."

XXVIII

ON BEING RATHER ILL

ROBERT LYND

There are people who seem positively to benefit from an illness. They grow in moral stature as they dwindle in physical health. A well-known journalist wrote an article recently, in which he described how, as he lay ill of influenza, all his wasted years passed before his imagination so that he was filled with a determination to become a better man. I envied him as I read, for I, too, was ill at the time and should have liked to think that my sufferings were doing me some good. But, alas, when I am ill, it is not so much my past as my present that troubles me. I repent of my sins most easily when I am feeling fairly well. When I am ill I am far more interested in what the doctor hears through the stethoscope than in the flutterings of my conscience. I do not mean to say that I never feel the slight pang that is the symptom of a desire for a better life. But almost any other ache can make me forget it. I am not one of those moral giants who can enjoy a bad conscience and a bad toothache at the same time. I am not sure, indeed, that illness does not entirely unfit me for the higher life. I become self-centred, impatient, incapable of even a moderately noble thought. There are invalids who, when they are in pain, try to hide the fact from other people. I, on the contrary, like other people to know about my sufferings.

I am even, I suspect, inclined to exaggerate them. If a friend calls, I at once tell him where the pain is, what the doctor said, and the still worse things I discovered in the medical dictionary. There is no use in anyone's coming to see me when I am ill if he wishes to talk about the style of Plato or the rhythm of Sir Thomas Browne. I do not object to a little light gossip, but even that wearies if he does not pause now and then to say something about the matter which is occupying my thoughts, which is my illness. It is true that conversation with an invalid about his illness should be tactful. The visitor, on coming into the room, if he has been to see you before, should say, "You're looking a lot better." Long before M. Coué was ever heard of, invalids were made new men by that simple formula. Again, as often as you have deftly worked the conversation back to yourself and your illness, the visitor should find an opportunity to interject some such remark as "You're a much better colour to-day," or "You've lost that puffy look," or "Your eye seems almost normal" I cannot commend the bedside manner of a portrait painter who came to see me, and, on hearing what I was suffering from, said, "You knew old Fudge, didn't you? That's what he had. I remember, when I was painting him, Dr. So-and-So pointed out the symptoms to me." Then, in a jaunty vein of reminiscence, "He was dead in six months." Now, all men are mortal, and old Fudge was a man; therefore old Fudge was mortal. But I do not think the sick-room is the place for rubbing these things in. What I want, when I am ill, is to be made to look on the bright side of things—to hear about the old Fudges who recovered and lived till they were ninety. On the day after the gruesome reminiscences

of the painter, I was to be the victim of another conversation equally tactless. I was allowed to get up and was lying on a sofa, wondering whether I should be able to get to Ascot, when Mrs. Apjohn, the cook, put her head round the door. "Excuse me, sir," she said: "you won't mind if I speak to you?" "Not a bit," said I, thinking she had some complaint to make and that she could find no one else to make it to. She came a yard or two into the room, and, looking a little nervous, said, "You *will* take care of yourself, sir, won't you?" "Oh, yes, Rather," I said, surprised almost into inarticulateness; "I'm feeling all right again." She lowered her eyelids sadly. "Mr. Apjohn," she said slowly, looking at the floor, didn't take care of himself, and I lost him. You won't mind my speaking, sir?" "God gracious, no," I assured her; "it's very good of you." But, as she turned her back and walked slowly out of the room, I seized my pipe and smoked like a steam-engine for some minutes till the effect of her words had partly worn off.

On the whole, I think, doctors are the best company when one is moderately ill. I liked even the big, bullying, white-beard specialist who mistook me during the war for a conscientious objector because I had not had my hair cut, and jeered at the notion that there was anything whatever the matter with me. He kept on talking about conscientious objectors, while what I wanted to talk about was my heart. "There's many a man thinks he has a conscience," he declared gruffly, "when all that's the matter with him is that he needs a blue pill." I tried to disembarrass him of the idea that I had a conscience, but he only grunted and looked at me as suspiciously as an angry bull. "Are you sure?"

he said, in a strong Scottish accent; "do you never think that *you're* right and that everybody else is wrong?" "Oh, often," I admitted, in some surprise—for, indeed, it was a notion that had often occurred to me. "I thought so," he said, nodding his head and staring at me gloomily; "do you ever feel the world's going straight to the devil?" "Yes, rather," I assured him, as genially as I could. "Aye," he said, nodding disgustedly, "I thought so. Come here," he bade me sternly; and he led me over to the corner of the consulting room where a portrait of Carlyle was hanging on the wall. He waved his arm vehemently at the face of the wicked old dyspeptic in the picture. "Take off the beard," he roared at me, "and there ye are. Stummick! Stummick! Stummick!" There are men who would have been humiliated by such outrageous behaviour on the part of a doctor who was charging three guineas for his insults; but, as for me, I was delighted to hear the opinion that there was nothing seriously wrong with me expressed in such vigorous language. The old doctor also pleased me because, as often as I mentioned what I considered a rather alarming symptom, he brushed it aside with a mocking laugh and declared that he had had it himself since he was eighteen years old. As he showed me to the doorstep he told me, if I couldn't get into the Army, to go for a row every morning on the pond in Regent's Park. I confess, when he said that, I began to sympathize with Naaman the leper. I always expect a doctor to give me at least a bottle, for it is much easier to drink "one sixteenth part three time a day after meals" than to row a boat in a London Park. I am one of those people who row windmill-fashion, and in whose hands the oars

describe huge circles instead of skimming like swallows along the surface of the water. In the circumstances there was nothing to be done but to consult another specialist who would give me a more sensible prescription. I found one without much difficulty, who ordered me to drink claret with my meals. "A man like you needs a stimulant," he declared with a firmness that impressed me. I found drinking claret much easier than rowing a boat in Regent's Park. Would that all doctors would remember how frail a creature is man, and would order their patients to do something that is within ordinary human capacity!

As a matter of fact, I rather like obeying a doctor's orders, if only they are reasonable and do not interfere too much with my habits. It gives me positive pleasure to be told to drink white wine instead of red, or to substitute orange juice for milk in my tea. To carry out instructions of this kind is like playing a new game. And, besides, I can easily persuade myself that I prefer orange juice to milk and white wine to red. On the whole, I think, the most interesting of all cures are those which rearrange one's diet. Every meal becomes pleasantly full of little rocks and shoals that have to be skilfully steered past—soup, fried fish, rice pudding, fruit, coffee. What, you may ask, is left to eat? But, indeed, I have never known a diet that did not mainly consist in avoiding the things one did not like. Who really cares for soup? Who for rice pudding? These are but a legacy from barbarous ages. I am content if a doctor leaves me a meal of two dishes, and I do not much mind what these are, provided they are not boiled cod and blancmange. But, to be honest, I also expect a doctor to give me

something in a bottle. I have seldom known a bottle that did not make me feel a great deal better within twenty-four hours. There is no other such convenient way of regaining health. The fine thing about taking medicine is that it wastes no time. To be told to chew one's food is in comparison to be set a Herculean task. It is, so far as my experience goes, impossible to chew and at the same time to enjoy one's meals. The very act of chewing gives a man a sullen, selfish air and makes him look like a sulky cow. Conversation and chewing do not go together. Conversation is possible at meals, indeed, only because the best people do not chew. As soon as you begin chewing you are lost as a social being. The great Fletcher ended, you will remember, by chewing—or as he called it, insalivating—even wine. It may be, of course, that men, like cows, were intended to eat their meals in silence, or, at least, with no noise but of munching. Man is the only animal, I believe, who pretends he is thinking of other things while he is eating. Compare a number of human beings at the table with a number of hens and chickens at the trough, and you will see how far man has travelled from the simplicities of the poultry-yard. The fowl makes no pretence that it is eating for any other reason than to satisfy its hunger. Man, on the other hand, is so ashamed of his appetite that he would blush to be caught abstracting delicacies from his neighbour's plate, as a chicken or any child of nature would do. At the same time, this pretence of indifference to food—of not minding your neighbour's having taken a larger or more attractive portion of chicken—is what has made man civilized. And if he is taught to think so much about his food as positively to chew it, I

cannot see how he can fail to revert to barbarism. Hence I trust the doctors will stick to their old-fashioned bottles of medicine, and to pills, plasters and poultices, all of which are consistent with the enjoyment of the finer pleasures of the table.

The great charm of medicine is that it is so easy to take it. It is not like being told to walk to the office every day, or to perform physical exercises after one's bath, or to go to bed at ten, or to take a holiday at Carlsbad. The doctor who is not content to be a medicine-man, or magician, adds immeasurably to the difficulties of being an invalid. In my secret heart, I agree with all he says about fresh air, exercise, chewing, and moderation in tobacco. But let him not deceive himself into thinking that he is not giving me the very deuce of a time—the very deuce of a time. On this note of querulousness I end.

XXIX

ON RUNNING AFTER ONE'S HAT.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

I feel an almost savage envy on hearing that London has been flooded in my absence, while I am in the mere country. My own Battersea has been, I understand, particularly favoured as a meeting of the waters. Battersea was already, as I need hardly say, the most beautiful of human localities. Now that it has the additional splendour of great sheets of water, there must be something quite incomparable in the landscape (or waterscape) of my own romantic town. Battersea must be a vision of Venice. The boat that brought the meat from the butcher's must have shot along those lanes of rippling silver with the strange smoothness of the gondola. The greengrocer who brought cabbages to the corner of the Latchmere Road must have leant upon the oar with the unearthly grace of the gondolier. There is nothing so perfectly poetical as an island; and when a district is flooded it becomes an archipelago.

Some consider such romantic views of flood or fire slightly lacking in reality. But really this romantic view of such inconveniences is quite as practical as the other. The true optimist who sees in such things an opportunity for enjoyment is quite as logical and much more sensible than the ordinary "Indignant Ratepayer" who sees in them an oppor-

tunity for grumbling. Real pain, as in the case of being burnt at Smithfield or having a toothache, is a positive thing; it can be supported, but scarcely enjoyed. But, after all, our toothaches are the exception, and as for being burnt at Smithfield, it only happens to us at the very longest intervals. And most of the inconveniences that make men swear or women cry are really sentimental or imaginative inconveniences—things altogether of the mind. For instance, we often hear grown-up people complaining of having to hang about a railway station and wait for a train. Did you ever hear a small boy complain of having to hang about a railway station and wait for a train? No; for to him to be inside a railway station is to be inside a cavern of wonder and a palace of poetical pleasures. Because to him the red light and the green light on the signal are like a new sun and a new moon. Because to him when the wooden arm of the signal falls down suddenly, it is as if a great king had thrown down his staff as a signal and started a shrieking tournament of trains. I myself am of little boys' habit in this matter. They also serve who only stand and wait for the two fifteen. Their meditations may be full of rich and fruitful things. Many of the most purple hours of my life have been passed at Clapham Junction, which is now, I suppose, under water. I have been there in many moods so fixed and mystical that the water might well have come up to my waist before I noticed it particularly. But in the case of all such annoyances, as I have said, everything depends upon the emotional point of view. You can safely apply the test to almost every one of the things that are currently talked of as the typical nuisance of daily life.

For instance, there is a current impression that it is unpleasant to have to run after one's hat. Why should it be unpleasant to the well-ordered and pious mind? Not merely because it is running, and running exhausts one. The same people run much faster in games and sports. The same people run much more eagerly after an uninteresting little leather ball than they will after a nice silk hat. There is an idea that it is humiliating to run after one's hat; and when people say it is humiliating they mean that it is comic. It certainly is comic; but man is a very comic creature, and most of the things he does are comic—eating, for instance. And the most comic things of all are exactly the things that are most worth doing—such as making love. A man running after a hat is not half so ridiculous as a man running after a wife.

Now a man could, if he felt rightly in the matter, run after his hat with the manliest ardour and the most sacred joy. He might regard himself as a jolly huntsman pursuing a wild animal, for certainly no animal could be wilder. In fact, I am inclined to believe that hat-hunting on windy days will be the sport of the upper classes in the future. There will be a meet of ladies and gentlemen on some high ground on a gusty morning. They will be told that the professional attendants have started a hat in such-and-such a thicket, or whatever be the technical term. Notice that this employment will in the fullest degree combine sport with humanitarianism. The hunters would feel that they were not inflicting pain. Nay, they would feel that they were inflicting pleasure, rich, almost riotous pleasure, upon the people who were looking on. When last I saw an old gentleman running after his hat in Hyde Park, I told him

that a heart so benevolent as his ought to be filled with peace and thanks at the thought of how much unaffected pleasure his every gesture and bodily attitude were at that moment giving to the crowd.

The same principle can be applied to every other typical domestic worry. A gentleman trying to get a fly out of the milk or a piece of cork out of his glass of wine often imagines himself to be irritated. Let him think for a moment of the patience of anglers sitting by dark pools, and let his soul be immediately irradiated with gratification and repose. Again, I have known some people of very modern views driven by their distress to the use of theological terms to which they attached no doctrinal significance, merely because a drawer was jammed tight and they could not pull it out. A friend of mine was particularly afflicted in this way. Every day his drawer was jammed, and every day in consequence it was something else that rhymes to it. But I pointed out to him that this sense of wrong was really subjective and relative: it rested entirely upon the assumption that the drawer could, should, and would come out easily. "But if," I said, "you picture to yourself that you are pulling against some powerful and oppressive enemy, the struggle will become merely exciting and not exasperating. Imagine that you are tugging up a lifeboat out of the sea. Imagine that you are roping up a fellow-creature out of an Alpine crevass. Imagine even that you are a boy again and engaged in a tug-of-war between French and English." Shortly after saying this I left him; but I have no doubt at all that my words bore the best possible fruit. I have no doubt that every day of his life he hangs on to the handle of that drawer

with a flushed face and eyes bright with battle, uttering encouraging shouts to himself, and seeming to hear all round him the roar of an applauding ring.

So I do not think that it is altogether fanciful or incredible to suppose that even the floods in London may be accepted and enjoyed poetically. Nothing beyond inconvenience seems really to have been caused by them; and inconvenience, as I have said, is only one aspect, and that the most unimaginative and accidental aspect of a really romantic situation. An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered. The water that girdled the houses and shops of London must, if anything, have only increased their previous witchery and wonder. For as the Roman Catholic priest in the story said: "Wine is good with everything except water," and on a similar principle, water is good with everything except wine.

XXX

A PORTRAIT.

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

It is at the age of eighty that I picture him without the vestige of a stoop, rather above middle height, of very well-proportioned figure, whose flatness of back and easy movements were the admiration of all who saw them. His iron-grey eyes had lost none of their colour, they were set-in deep, so that their upper lids were invisible, and had a peculiar questioning directness, apt to change suddenly into twinkles. His head was of fine shape—one did not suspect that it required a specially made hat, being a size larger than almost any other head; it was framed in very silky silvery hair, brushed in an arch across his forehead, and falling in becoming curves over the tips of his ears; and he wore always a full white beard and moustaches, which concealed a jaw and chin of great determination cleft by a dimple. His nose had been broken in his early boyhood; it was the nose of a thinker, broad and of noticeable shape. The colour of his cheeks was a fine dry brown; his brow very capacious, both wide and high, and endowed with a singular serenity. But it was the balance and poise of his head which commanded so much attention. In a theatre, church, concert-hall, there was never any head so fine as his, for the silvery hair and beard lent to its massiveness a curious grace and delicacy.

The owner of that head could not but be endowed

with force, sagacity, humour, and the sense of justice. It expressed, indeed, his essential quality—equanimity, for there were two men in him—he of the chin and jaw, a man of action and tenacity, and he of the nose and brow, the man of speculation and impersonality; yet these two were so curiously balanced and blended that there was no harsh ungraceful conflict. And what made this equanimity so memorable was the fact that both his power of action and his power of speculation were of high quality. He was not a commonplace person content with a little of both. He wanted and had wanted throughout life, if one may judge by records, a good deal of both, ever demanding with one half of him strong and continuous action, and with the other half, high and clean thought and behaviour. The desire for the best both in material and spiritual things remained with him through life. He felt things deeply; and but for his strange balance, and a yearning for inward peace which never seems to have deserted him, his ship might well have gone down in tragedy.

To those who had watched that journey, his voyage through life seemed favourable, always on the top of the weather. He had worked hard, and he had played hard, but never too hard. And though one might often see him irritated, I think no one ever saw him bored. He perceived a joke quicker than most of us; he was never eccentric, yet fundamentally independent of other people's opinions, and perhaps a little unconscious that there were better men than he. Not that he was conceited, for of this quality, so closely allied to stupidity and humbug, he had about as much as the babe unborn. He was, indeed, a natural foe to anaemia in any of its forms,

just as he was instinctively hostile to gross bull-beef men and women. The words, "a bullying chap," were used by him as crushing dispraise. I can recall him now in his chair after dinner, listening to one, who, puffing his cigarette, is letting himself go on a stream of robustious, rather swaggering complacencies; with what a comprehending straight look he regards the speaker, not scornful, not sarcastic, but simply, as it were, saying: "No, my young buck, for all your fine full-blooded talk, and all your red face, you are what I see you to be, and you will do what I tell you to do!" Such men had no chance with him when it came to the tug of war; he laid his will on them as if they had been children.

He was that rather rare thing, a pure-blooded Englishman; having no strain of Scotch, Welsh, Irish, or foreign blood in his pedigree for four hundred years at least. He sprang from a long line of farmers intermarrying with their kind in the most southern corner of Devonshire, and it is probable that Norse and British blood were combined in him in a high state of equality. Even in the actual situation of his place of origin, the principle of balance had been maintained, for the old farmhouse from which his grandfather had emerged had been perched close to the cliff. Thus, to the making of him had gone land and sea, the Norseman and the Celt.

Articled to the Law at the age of sixteen by his father, a Plymouth merchant, whose small ancient ships traded to the Mediterranean in fruits, leather, and wines, he had come to London, and at the earliest possible date (as was the habit with men in those times) had been entered on the rolls as a solicitor. Often has he told me of the dinner he gave in honour of that event. "I was a thread-paper, then,"

he would say (indeed, he never became fat).—"We began with a barrel of oysters." About that and other festivities of his youth, there was all the rich and rollicking flavour of the days of Pickwick. He was practically dependent on his own exertions from the time he began to practise his profession, and it was characteristic of him that he never seems to have been hard pressed for money. The inherent sanity and moderation of his instincts preserved him, one imagines, from the financial ups and downs of most young men, for there was no niggardliness in him, and a certain breadth of conception characterised his money affairs throughout life. It was rather by the law of gravity, therefore, whereby money judiciously employed attracts money, and the fact that he lived in that money-maker's Golden Age, the nineteenth century, that he had long been (at the age of eighty) a wealthy man. Money was to him the symbol of a well-spent, well-ordered life, provocative of warmth in his heart because he loved his children, and was careful of them to a fault. He did not marry till he was forty-five, but his feeling for the future of his family manifested itself with the birth of his first child. Selecting a fair and high locality, not too far away from London, he set himself at once to make a country place, where the little things should have fresh air, new milk, and all the fruits of the earth, home-grown round them. Quite wonderful was the forethought he lavished on that house and little estate stretching down the side of a hill, with its walled gardens, pasture, corn-land and coppice. All was solid, and of the best, from the low four-square red brick house with its concrete terrace and French windows, to the cow-houses down by the coppice. From the oak trees, hundreds of

years old, on the lawns, to the peach trees just planted along the south sunny walls. But here too, there was no display for the sake of it, and no extravagance. Everything was at hand, from home-baked bread, to mush-rooms wild and tame ; from the stable with their squat clock-tower, to pigsties ; from roses that won all the local prizes, to bluebells ; but nothing redundant or pretentious.

The place was an endless pleasure to him, who to the last preserved his power of taking interest, not only in great, but in little things. Each small triumph over difficulty—the securing of hot water in such a quarter, the better lighting of another, the rescue of the nectarines from wasps, the quality of his Alderney cows, the encouragement of rooks—afforded him as much simple and sincere satisfaction as every little victory he achieved in his profession, or in the life of the Companies which he directed. But with all his shrewd practical sense, and almost naive pleasure in material advantage, he combined a very real spiritual life of his own. Nor was there anything ascetic in that inner life. It was mellow as the music of Mozart, his most beloved composer ; Art and Nature both had their part in it. He was, for instance, very fond of opera, but only when it could be called "grand" ; and it grieved him that opera was no longer what it had been, yet was it secretly a grave satisfaction that he had known those classical glories denied to the present generation. He loved indeed almost all classical music, but (besides Mozart) especially Beethoven, Gluck, and Meyerbeer, whom he insisted (no less than Herbert Spencer) on considering a great composer. Wagner he tried very hard to appreciate and, after visiting Bayreuth, even persuaded himself that he

had succeeded, though he never ceased to point out the great difference that existed between this person and Mozart. He loved the Old Masters of painting, having for favourites amongst the Italians: Rafael, Correggio, Titian, Tintoretto; and amongst Englishmen Reynolds and Romney. On the other hand, he regarded Hogarth and Rubens as coarse, but Vandyke he very much admired, because of his beautiful painting of hands, the hall-mark, he would maintain, of an artist's quality. I cannot remember his feeling about Rembrandt, but Turner he certainly distrusted as extravagant. Botticeli and the earlier masters he had not as yet quite learned to relish; and Impressionism, including Whistler, never really made conquest of his taste, though he always resolutely kept his mind open to what was modern—feeling himself young at heart.

Once on a spring day, getting over a stile, I remembered him saying:

"Eighty! I can't believe it. Seems very queer. I don't feel it. Eighty!" And, pointing to a blackbird that was singing, he added: "That takes the years off you!" His love of Nature was very intimate, simple, and unconscious. I can see him standing by the pond of a summer evening watching the great flocks of starlings that visited those fields; or, with his head a little to one side, listening rapturously to a skylark. He would contemplate, too, with a sort of serene passion, sunset effects, and every kind of view.

But his greatest joy in life had been his long summer holidays, in Italy or among the Alps, and his memory was a perfect storehouse of peaks, passes, and arrivals at Italian inns. He had been a great walker, and, as an old man, was still very active.

I can remember him on horseback at the age of sixty, though he had never been a sportsman—not being in the way of hunting, having insufficient patience for fishing, and preferring to spend such time as he might have had for shooting, in communing with his beloved mountains. His love for all kinds of beauty, indeed, was strangely potent; and perhaps the more natural and deep for its innocence of all tradition and formal culture. He got it, I think, from his mother, of whom he always spoke with reverence as "the most beautiful woman in the Three Towns." Yes, his love of beauty was a sensuous, warm glow pervading the whole of him, secretly separating him from the majority of his associates. A pretty face, a beautiful figure, a mellow tune, the sight of dancing, a blackbird's song, the moon behind a poplar tree, starry nights, sweet scents, and the language of Shakespeare all these moved him deeply, the more perhaps because he had never learned to express his feelings. His attempts at literature indeed were strangely naive and stilted: his verse, in the comic vein, rather good; but all, as it were, like his period, ashamed to express any intimate feeling except in classical language. Yet his literary tastes were catholic; Milton was his favourite poet, Byron he also admired; Browning he did not care for; his favourite novelist was George Eliot, and, curiously enough—in later life—Turgenev. I well remember when the translated volumes of that author were coming out, how he would ask for another of those yellow books. He did not know why he liked them, with all those "crackjaw" Russian names; but assuredly it was because they were written by one who worshipped beauty.

The works of Dickens and Thackeray he read

with appreciation, on the whole, finding the first perhaps a little too grotesque, and the second a little too satiric. Scott, Trollope, Marryat, Blackmore, Hardy, and Mark Twain also pleased him; but Meredith he thought too "misty."

A great theatre-goer all his life, he was very lukewarm towards modern actors, comparing them adversely with those constellations of the past, Edmund and Charles Kean, Charlie Mathews, Farren, Power, "little Robson," and Helen Faucit. He was, however, great lover of Kate Vaughan's dancing; an illustration of the equanimity of one who had formed his taste on Taglioni.

Irving he would only accept in *Louis XI.*, *The Bells*, and, I think, *Charles I.*, and for his mannerisms he had a great aversion. There was something of the old grand manner about his theatre habits. He attended with the very best and thinnest lavender kid gloves on his hands, which he would hold up rather high and clap together at the end of an act which pleased him; even, on memorable occasions, adding the word "Bravo." He never went out before the end of a play, however vehemently he might call it "poor stuff," which, to be quite honest, he did about nine times out of ten. And he was ever ready to try again, having a sort of touching confidence in an art which had betrayed him so often. His opera hats were notable, usually of such age as to have lost shape, and surely the largest in London. Indeed, his dress was less varied than that of any man I have ever seen; but always neat and well-cut, for he went habitually to the best shops, and without eccentricity of any kind. He carried a repeating gold watch and thin round gold chain which passed, smooth and sinuous as a little snake,

through a small black seal with a bird on it; and he never abandoned very well made side-spring boots with cork soles, greatly resenting the way other boots dirtied his hands, which were thin and brown with long polished nails, and blue veins outstanding. For reading only, he wore tortoise-shell eyeglasses, which he would perch low down on the bridge of his nose, so that he could look over them, for his eyes were very long-sighted. He was extremely fastidious in his linen, and all personal matters, yet impatient of being mollycoddled, or in any way over-valeted. Even on the finest days, he carried an umbrella, the ferrule of which, from his habit of stumping it on the pavement, had a worn and harassed look, and was rarely more than half present.

Having been a Conservative Liberal in politics till well past sixty, it was not until Disraeli's time that he became a Liberal Conservative. This was curious, for he always spoke doubtfully of "Dizzy," and even breathed the word "humbug" in connection with him. Probably he was offended by what he termed "the extravagance" in Dizzy's rival. For the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Salisbury he had respect without enthusiasm; and conceived for John Bright a great admiration as soon as he was dead. But on the whole the politician who had most attracted him had been Palmerston, because—if memory serves—he had in such admirable degree the faculty of "astonishing their weak nerves." For, though never a Jingo, and in later days both cautious and sane in his Imperialism, he had all a Briton's essential deep-rooted distrust of the foreigner. He felt that they were not quite safe, not quite sound, and must from time to time be made to feel this. Born two years after the Battle of Waterloo, he had

inherited a certain high pride of island birth. And yet in one case, where he was for years in close contact with a foreigner he conceived for him so grave a respect, that it was quite amusing to watch the discomfiture of his traditional distrust. It was often a matter of wonder amongst those who knew him that a man of his ability and judgment had never even sought to make his mark in public affairs. Of the several reasons for this, the chief was, undoubtedly, the extraordinary balance of his temperament. To attain pre-eminence in any definite department of life would have warped and stunted too many of his instincts, removed too many of his interests; and so he never specialised in anything. He was quite unambitious, always taking the lead in whatever field he happened to be, by virtue of his great capacity and will-power, but never pushing himself, and apparently without any life-aim, but that of leading a sane, moderate, and harmonious existence.

And it is for this that he remains written on the national page, as the type of a lost and golden time, when life to each man seemed worth living for its own sake, without thought of its meaning as a whole, or much speculation as to its end. There was something classical, measured, and mellow in his march adown the years, as if he had been god-mothered by Harmony. And yet, though he said his prayers and went to church, he could not fairly have been called a religious man; for at the time when he formed his religious habits, "religion" had as yet received no shocks, and reigned triumphant over an unconscious nation whose spirit was sleeping: and when "religion," disturbed to its foundations, began to die, and people all round him were just becoming religious enough to renounce the beliefs they no

longer held, he was too old to change, and continued to employ the mechanism of a creed which had never really been vital to him. He was in essence pagan: All was right with his world! His love was absorbed by Nature, and his wonder by the Great Starry Scheme he felt all around. This was God to him; for it was ever in the presence of the stars that he was most moved to a sense of divine order. Looking up at those tremulous cold companions he seemed more reverent, and awed, than ever he was in the face of creeds or his fellow man. Whether stirred by the sheer beauty of Night, or by its dark immensity swarming with those glittering worlds, he would stand silent, and then, perhaps, say wistfully: "What little bits of things we are! Poor little wretches!" Yes, it was then that he really worshipped, adoring the great wonders of Eternity. No one ever heard him talk with conviction of a future life. He was far too self-reliant to accept what he was told, save by his own inner voice; and that did not speak to him with certainty. In fact, as he grew old, to be uncertain of all such high things was part of his real religion; it seemed to him, I think, impertinent to pretend to intimate knowledge of what was so much bigger than himself. But neither his conventional creed, nor that awed uncertainty which was his real religion were ever out of hand; they jogged smoothly on in double harness, driven and guided by a supreme power—his reverence for Life. He abhorred fanaticism. In this he truly mirrored the spirit of that great peacefully expanding river, the Victorian Era, which began when he came of age. And yet, in speaking before him of deep or abstract things, it was not safe to reckon without his criticism, which would sometimes make power-

fully shrewd deductions out of the sheer logical insight of a nature neither fundamentally concerned with other worlds, nor brought up to the ways of discussion. He was pre-eminently the son of a time between two ages—a past age of old, unquestioning faith in Authori y ; a future age of new faith, already born but not yet grown. Still sheltering in the shade of the old tree which was severed at the roots and toppling, he never, I think, clearly saw—though he may have had glimpses—that men, like children whose mother has departed from their home, were slowly being forced to trust in, and be good to, themselves and to one another, and so to form out of their necessity, desperately, unconsciously, their new great belief in Humanity. Yes, he was the son of *a time between two ages*—the product of an era without real faith—an individualist to the core.

His attitude towards the poor, for instance, was essentially that of man to man. Save that he could not tolerate impostors (one of his favourite words), and saw through them with almost startling rapidity, he was compassionate to any who had fallen on evil fortune, and especially those who had been in any way connected with him. But in these almonary transactions he was always particularly secretive, as if rather doubting their sagacity, and the wisdom of allowing them to become known—himself making up and despatching the parcels of old clothes, and rather surreptitiously producing such coins and writing such cheques as were necessary. But "the poor," in bulk, were always to him the concern of the Poor Law pure and simple, and in no sense of the individual citizen. It was the same with malefactors, he might pity as well as condemn them, but the idea that the society to which he and they belonged was

in any way responsible for them, would never have occurred to him. His sense of justice, like that of his period, was fundamentally based on the notion that every man had started with equal, or at all events, with quite sufficient opportunities, and must be judged as if he had. But, indeed, it was not the custom in his day to concern oneself with problems outside one's own class. Within that class, and in all matters domestic, no man was ever born with a nicer sense of justice. It was never overridden by his affections; very seldom, and that with a certain charming *naïvete*, by his interests. This sense of justice, however, in no way prevented him from being loved; for, in spite of a tempe r apt to take fire, flare up, and quickly die down again, he was one of the most loveable of men. There was not an ounce of dourness or asperity in his composition. His laughter was of a most infectious kind, singularly spontaneous and delightful, resembling the laughter of a child. The change which a joke wrought in the aspect of his large, dignified, and rather noble face, was disconcerting. It became wrinkled, or, as it were, crumpled; and such a twinkling overcame his eyes as was frequently only to be extinguished by moisture. "That's rich!" was his favourite expression to describe what had tickled him; for he had preserved the use of Devonshire expressions, bringing them forth, from an intimate pet drawer of memory, and lingering over them with real gusto. He still loved, too, such Devonshire dishes of his boyhood, as "junket" and "toad in the hole"; and one of his favourite memories was that of the meals snatched at the old coaching Inn at Exeter, while they changed the horses of the Plymouth to the London coach. Twenty-four hours at ten miles an hour, without ever

a break! Glorious drive! Glorious the joints of beef, the cherry brandy! Glorious the old stage coachman, a "monstrous fat chap" who at that time ruled the road!

In the city, where his office was situate, he was wont, though at all times a very moderate eater, to frequent substantial, old-fashioned hostelries such as Roche's, Pim's, or Birch's, in preference to newer and more pretentious places of refreshment. He had a remarkable palate too, and though he drank very little, was, in his prime, considered as fine a judge of wine as any in London. Of tea he was particularly fond, and always consumed the very best Indian, made with extreme care, maintaining that the Chinese variety was only fit for persons of no taste.

He had little liking for his profession, believing it to be beneath him, and that Heaven had intended him for an advocate; in which he was probably right, for his masterful acumen could not have failed to assure him a foremost position at the Bar. And in him, I think, it is certain that a great Judge was lost to the State. Despite this contempt for what he called the "pettifogging" character of his occupation, he always inspired profound respect in his clients; and among the shareholders of his Companies, of which he directed several, his integrity and judgment stood so high that he was enabled to pursue successfully a line of policy often too comprehensive, and far-seeing for the temper of the times. The reposeful dignity, and courage of his head and figure when facing an awkward General Meeting could hardly have been exceeded. He sat, as it were, remote from its gusty temper, quietly determining its course.

Truly memorable were his conflicts with the only other man of his calibre on those Boards, and I can-

not remember that he was ever beaten. He was at once the quicker tempered and more cautious. And if he had not the other's stoicism and iron nerve, he saw further into the matter in hand, was more unremitting in his effort, equally tenacious of purpose, and more magnetic. In fact, he had a way with him.

But, after all said, it was in his dealings with children that the best and sweetest side of his personality was manifested. With them he became completely tender, inexhaustibly interested in their interests, absurdly patient, and as careful as a mother. No child ever resisted him, or even dreamed of doing so. From the first moment they loved his white hair and beard, his "feathers" as one little thing called them. They liked the touch of his thin hand, which was never wet or cold; and, holding to it, were always ready to walk with him—wandering with complete unanimity, not knowing quite where or for what reason. How often have I not watched him starting out on that high adventure with his grandson, his face turned gravely down towards a smaller face turned not quite so gravely up; and heard their voices tremendously concerned with all the things they might be going to do together! How often have I not seen them coming back, tired as cats, but still concerned about what was next going to happen! And children were always willing to play cricket with him because he bowled to them very slowly, pitching up what he called "three-quarter" balls, and himself always getting "out" almost before he went in. For, although he became in his later years a great connoisseur of cricket, spending many days at Lord's or the Oval, choosing out play of the very highest class, and quite impatient of the Eton and

Harrow Match, he still performed in a somewhat rococo fashion, as of a man taught in the late twenties of the last century, and having occasion to revive that knowledge about 1895. He bent his back knee, and played with a perfectly crooked bat, to the end that when he did hit the ball, which was not too often, it invariably climbed the air. There was, too, about his batting, a certain vein of recklessness or bravado, somewhat out of keeping with his general character, so that, as has been said, he was never in too long. And when he got out he would pitch the bat down as if he were annoyed, which would hugely please his grandson, showing of course that he had been trying his very best, as indeed, he generally had. But his bowling was extremely impressive, being effected with very bent knees, and a general air of first putting the ball to the eye, as if he were playing bowls; in this way he would go on and on giving the boy "an innings," and getting much too hot. In fielding he never could remember on the spur of the moment whether it was his knees or his feet that he ought to close; and this, in combination with a habit of bending rather cautiously, because he was liable to lumbago, detracted somewhat from his brilliance; but when the ball was once in his hands, it was most exciting—impossible to tell whether he would throw it at the running batsman, the wicket, or the bowler, according as the game appeared to him at the moment to be double wicket, single wicket, or rounders. He had lived in days when games were not the be-all and end-all of existence, and had never acquired a proper seriousness in such matters. Those who passed from cricket with him to cricket in the cold wide world found a change for which at first they were unable to account.

But even more fascinating to children than his way of playing cricket was his perfect identification with whatever might be the matter in hand. The examination of a shell, the listening to the voice of the sea imprisoned in it, the making of a cocked hat out of the *Times* newspaper, the doing up of little buttons, the feeding of pigeons with crumbs, the holding fast of a tiny leg while walking beside a pony, all these things absorbed him completely, so that no visible trace was left of the man whose judgment on affairs was admirable and profound. Nor, whatever the provocation, could he ever bring himself to point the moral of anything to a child, having that utter toleration of their foibles which only comes from a natural and perfectly unconscious love of being with them. His face, habitually tranquil, wore in their presence a mellow look of almost devil-may-care serenity.

Their sayings, too, he treasured, as though they were pearls. First poems, such as:

I sorr a worm,
It was half-ly dead;
I took a great spud,
And spread through his head

were to him of singular fair promise. Their diagnoses of character, moreover, especially after visiting a circus, filled him with pure rapture, and he would frequently repeat this one:

"Father, is Uncle a clever man?"

"H'm! well—yes, certainly."

"I never seen no specimens. He can't balance a pole on his nose, for instance."

To the declining benison of their prayers, from their "darling father and mother," to "all poor

people who are in distress," he loved to listen, not so much for the sentiments expressed, as because, in their little nightgowns, they looked so sweet, and were so roundabout in their way of getting to work.

Yes, children were of all living things his chosen friends, and they knew it.

But in his long life he made singularly few fast friendships with grown-up people, and, as far as I know, no enemies. For there was in him, despite his geniality, a very strong vein of fastidiousness, and such essential deep love of domination, that he found, perhaps, few men of his own age and standing to whom he did not feel natively superior. His most real and lifelong friendship was for a certain very big man with a profound hatred of humbug and a streak of "the desperate character" in him. They held each other in the highest esteem, or, as they would probably have put it, swore by one another; the one grumbling at, but reverencing, the other's high and resolute equanimity, the other deploring and admiring the one's deep and generous recklessness. The expressions: "Just like John, the careful fellow!" "Just like Sil, reckless beggar!" were always on their lips; for like all their generation they were sparing of encomium; and great, indeed, must have been their emotion before they would show their feelings. Dear as they were to each other's hearts, they never talked together of spiritual things, they never spoke in generalities, but gravely smoking their cigars, discussed their acquaintances, investments, wine, their nephews and grandchildren, and the affairs of the State—condemning the advertising fashion in which everything was now done. Once in a way they would tell a story—but they

knew each other's stories too well; once in a way quote a line of Byron, Shakespeare, or Milton; or whistle to each other, inharmoniously, a bar or two from some song that Grisi, Mario, or Jenny Lind had sung. Once in a way memories of the heyday of their youth, those far-off golden hours, stealing over them, they would sit silent, with their grave steady eyes following the little rings of bluish smoke. . . . Yes, for all their lack of demonstration, they loved each other well.

I seem still to see the subject of this portrait standing at his friend's funeral one bleak November day, the pale autumn sunlight falling on the silver of his uncovered head a little bowed, and on his grave face, for once so sad. I hear the tones of his voice, still full and steady; and from the soul of his eyes, looking, as it were, through and through those forms of death to some deep conclusion of his own, I know how big and sane and sweet he was.

His breed is dying now, it has nearly gone. But as I remember him with that great quiet forehead, with his tenderness, and his glance which travelled to the heart of what it rested on, I despair of seeing his like again. For, with him there seems to me to have passed away a principle, a golden rule of life, nay, more a spirit—the soul of Balance. It has stolen away, as in the early morning the stars steal out of the sky. *He* knew its tranquil secret, and where he is, there must it still be hovering.

INTRODUCTION TO THE NOTES

If you have enjoyed the reading of some of these essays, you may be ready to go further and consider what it would be to write a real essay: what rules have guided past essayists, in the choice of subjects; in the limitation of length; in the form and style. This train of ideas will bring you to the point of demanding a definition. What is an *essay?* Wherein does it differ from an *article?* from a *pamphlet* or *tract?* from a *treatise?*

As is natural to men, I had myself a vague idea, based on the many essays I had read, of what an essay was; but had not thought it out to a definition, nor yet had it made clear and plain to me by others, till I read Mr. J. B. Priestley's introduction in his selection called 'Essayists Past and Present', published by Herbert Jenkins in 1925. You cannot do better than read this, if you are ready for it, as I have supposed above. Lest you find it hard to master this guide to what makes an essay, or in reading, read wrongly and fail to carry away from it what I think you should, I venture to quote and repeat from Mr. Priestley; by way of underlining him as you read, rather than to save you the perusal.

Men have written works—treatises, even monuments of learning—and called them Essays. This was modesty. They took advantage of a word whose meaning is modest and humble: the English word *Essay* means 'a try': *to essay*, 'to try' At the other end of the scale, masters call the productions which they require from boys in school by the same name, *essays*. This is flattery. Or rather, at the lowest and plainest value of the word, it is no more than right and correct. When, however, my pupil has grown up and got so far as to read a few of the Essays of the Essayists, he will agree that it was flattery.

On account of the way in which the word 'essay' has been used or misused, it is easier to define an *essayist* than an *essay*. We exclude from the number of the English Essayists the people who called their philosophical, historical or poetical works by the modest name of essays; and we exclude also all those who write, and in all ages have written, set pieces on a chosen or given subject, composed in the manner of the schoolboy essay though with more

style and more knowledge. The most excellent answer to a question in an M.A. paper—even if the question had the form 'Write an essay on .....'—is not, in the true sense, an Essay.

In fact the purpose of the real essay, as understood in English literature, is not the increasing of your knowledge, but the exciting of your interest in something personal or human. I would add that the interest often lies in the easy approach to great problems through this personal, human channel: problems which you would be terrified to study in their overpowering, solid, repellent whole, but into which you are decoyed in the course of some essays, just as you are in some poems and some novels. You then find them real, living, human, like the essayist himself who is talking to you. This produces the same delight as the child's—to whom 'algebra' has the terror of the darkness, the precipice or the avalanche,—when he has actually done a few sums in x and y, felt his power and shouted in triumph, "Now I can do Algebra!"

But the subject of the essay need not be thus a great or deep one. As you enjoy the delightful talk of some acquaintance or friend, it is his inimitable way of doing it that holds you: he can charm your senses whatever he talks about, problems or trifles. Much of the quaint and delightful humour of the most entertaining essays consists in the mock-serious treatment of trifles with all the pomp due to the most serious questions: though it is still more to the credit of the essayist if, not content with raising a smile, he proceeds to draw out, from the trifles that he selects, those threads of real existence, of humanity and universality, that are always there hidden. I should not, I believe, call him a *better essayist* for doing so; but he produces, perhaps, a higher kind of pleasure as you read him, a thing you enjoy the more because it is rarely awakened in you.

As Mr. Priestley says, 'the true essay approximates to familiar talk.' The talker has the advantage of his face, voice and presence, and the essayist would seem to be at a loss to make up for this; but in the difficulty of this lies the art of it; and the fact remains that this and that great essayist has succeeded in rendering a picture of his mind and affections as real as if he were present in the flesh. He is even *more* vivid than Nature; he can by his art heighten the picture, and be 'more himself in print than he is in his own person and talk.' Mr. Priestley here instances Charles Lamb. I should say that Lamb exaggerates his own lazy and egotistic leanings, depreciates his own quickness and versatility of mind; and that it is more truly thus with

all the creators of great essays; and that they reveal but part of themselves, the part, no doubt, that charms us most and would charm us if we heard them talk.

We do not need to trouble much about the distinction between essayists and literary critics, or between an essay and a literary criticism. The two are like wedges pointing in opposite directions. The literary critic starts broad and large, calling on all Nature and mankind to support him as he lays down principles, and ending by drawing in all these forces to the point of attack or support. The essayist starts from the point: he selects the small, the tiny, the individual instance and broadens it out till he has somehow engaged and involved around it the greatest considerations It should, perhaps, follow that ability to do the one well is nearly akin to ability to do the other: but the choice, the predilection, would draw *the one* to be an essayist in practice, *the other*, of the same mental mould but different emotions, to be a critic.

Taking a cast back to what we were saying, an essay charms you much as the talk of a talker does. Naturally, to be a choice essay, it must be like the familiar talk of a really choice and rare talker, a first-class conversationalist. Well, what of his company? do the hearers play a part? They do, as we know. The talker grows to be a first-class conversationalist, as is well known, by whetting himself on his listeners Mr. Priestley makes one of his best points when he refers to the essayist's corresponding whetstone—the Press, or rather the audience engaged through the Press to listen to him. It was, historically, a great aid to the Essay when it appeared in the newspaper. This was the period of the 'Spectator' and its companions. It may be said, too, that essays can only find favour with a well-educated public, and where that class is small they cannot flourish. The rise of Steele's and Addison's and other papers was the sign of the rise of an educated public. Besides giving economic support to literature, and paying the essayist for his essay, the Press furnished that test which was required by him for his work. Thus not only the subject and style of the Essay, but even its length, is directly conditioned by the public which day after day, week after week or month after month reads it with acceptance in some paper or periodical magazine. The essayist himself does not so much learn what to avoid, as gain confidence to indulge in revealing himself in his favourite way. This is just like the case of the clever and entertaining talker. 'He comes to feel that he is among friends and can afford, as it were, to let himself go.'

Thus the essay is a frank giving-away of some part of one's character and personality which one has found other people like and want to see more of. It depends on the readers. At first it is a personal adventure to make a start—to see if people like it, if they want it:—in its small and feeble beginnings, an *essay* indeed! Then it grows with applause, and feeds on it. This is far from being the case with your pilers of philosophical works, historical tomes,—or with your firers of fanatical tracts or controversial pamphlets: the latter care not a fig for any opinions but the writer's; the former put their luck with the public on one throw, flinging the life-work or the work of years into the market, with the chance of success, and in reserve, the consolation of labour performed.

The Essay feels its way. Nor is it any help to you to become an English Essayist,—if you have that ambition,—that a great body of Essay is already extant and a great set of traditions and of models available to consult. Every single essayist felt his way with the public; it is never the same public again, and therefore so must you;—essay afresh and without a guide except what drives you, that something in yourself which will out in print.

NOTES.

Francis Bacon

Francis Bacon, 1561—1626: a contemporary of Shakespeare. Educated at Cambridge: Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, then Lord Chancellor: Baron Verulam, and Viscount St. Albans'. Found guilty of taking bribes, fined and imprisoned, then pardoned. Famous above all for his great work on scientific method, the *Novum Organum* and supposed by some to have been the real author of Shakespeare's plays.

I

Of Travel.

(How is it that we can include Bacon among the essay-writers after defining the essay as a personal revelation? He rather sets out to expound the subject for its own sake or for a show of erudition, like the school-boy writing his exercise, or the candidate answering the question in his paper for his degree. We can, however, see a great deal of this writer in his essays: his copious instances and quotations and his delight in them: his delight in his own gravity and wisdom—almost like Polonius, but not stupid like him: his evident breadth of tastes and experience, and a manner both frank and quaint—quaint to us if not in his own day: his way of pronouncing like a judge: these things make up for the want of a deliberate purpose to let himself go. He certainly lectures like an interesting lecturer rather than talks like an interesting talker; but luckily he digresses, wanders, and fetches himself back again, or we should not like his lecture half so much. And his chosen words and turns of sentence strike and stick).

His first sentence here is an aphorism; his second an epigram as well an aphorism.

Page 1. **is a part of** (education and experience): contributes to, goes to make.

entrance, initiation: you must have mastered the first steps.

I allow well: I heartily approve: a cold, judicial turn of phrase, no exaggerated word being allowed to appear.

exercises or discipline: for the mind, not for the body. He is thinking of the lectures or discourses or disputations you can hear at foreign universities: the parties you might be asked to to meet famous men and hear them talk: the courts or councils you might attend, to see how justice is done, or hear famous lawyers, or famous orators. See later.

as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Why should you note in a book that to-day you saw a whale or the sea-serpent, *i. e.*, things which come accidentally in your path; the chance birds that light on the deck, the flotsam of the sea? On land you might make observations that require the use of your intelligence: as, here I see the villagers terrace their fields; (irrigation from a stream round the corner, no doubt): here the holdings are small; (division of family property must be the system here): and so on, making inferences from what you see. These deserve note in a diary more than those.

consistories ecclesiatic: a consistory is a court or Council, but the word is especially used in this connection, *i. e.*, of the Church: courts or councils of Bishops or Clergy. It means a sitting-together: particularly the sitting *together* of those of different ranks.

monuments, not in the rather restricted modern sense of a tall pillar or even a memorial in stone; but rather including all memorials inscribed with any information about past events or people, and probably pictures and statues.

PAGE 2. **Burses**, (late Latin **bursa**, a purse) exchanges. The word survives in almost every country in Europe for this particular purpose: the Bursa or French Bourse in every capital corresponds to the Royal Exchange in London. Exchanges are, however, now numerous, and Exchange or Bursa means the money exchange in particular: and wherever the term 'Exchange' is used it includes the building—the merchants' meeting place—and the society or body of merchants enrolled as members, *e. g.*, the Stock Exchange, the Corn Exchange, etc.

triumphs, in the Roman sense: processions in honour of victory.

masks, as in Shakespeare, *i. e.*, masques, masqueradings.

captital executions, *i. e.*, the executing or carrying out of capital punishments; capital punishments are those for capital offences; in Rome this meant not strictly death, but the punishments which degraded a man from his rank and

privileges, like banishment or enslavement. *Capital* has come to be used specially of the highest penalty, death; and *execution* separately has come to mean the same, whether by hanging or beheading.

Bacon avoids discussing the *pros* and *cons* of allowing the young to see executions: so he does not show what his advice would be, though he is clearly aware of something undesirable about these sights. By lumping them with weddings, funerals, etc., he seems to assume that they are bound to come in your way some time. When cities were small it may have been more likely; and when you lived under autocratic kings it was probably a *duty* to go.

card, map chart, **carta**).

adament, diamant, diamond as the word has come to be.

a great adamant of acquintance, the hardest test of knowledge. [To take it here as 'magnet' gives no sense.]

Let him......travelleth. You will hear the same advice given again and again to people going abroad, Bacon might be advising you to-day. True, Bacon wrote all this for a very limited circle of educated noblemen who could tour abroad, and he recommends the society of ambassadors.

PAGE. 3. **in all kinds. Persons eminent in all kinds** are persons distinguished in all the various spheres or walks of life.

how the life agreeth with the fame, whether report is true and the man really is as good, wise or learned as his reputation.

mistresses, healths, place, or words : women, drinking, rivalry as to precedence (who should count higher in rank), and chance expressions at which someone takes offence, though you did not purposely choose the word to be offensive.

And let his travel appear......stories. You won't be very popular if you ape the dress or ways of any of the countries you have visited ; be content to be able to tell about them if asked ; and when asked, think what to say and measure your words, rather than 'gush' about where you have been and what you have done.

his country manners : for 'the manners of his (native) country.'

prick in, embroider : keep his own native manners as the groundwork, and add the best refinements he has observed in foreign nations to his own.

II

OF FRIENDSHIP

PAGE. 4. **'Whosever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god':** A good example of an epigram.

conversation, conduct of life, as in the Bible.

falsely and feignedly: Bacon implies, what is most intolerant, that because these men were pagans, *i.e.*, strangers to the revelation of God in Christ, they had no right to pretend to lead a higher life by means of retirement from the world; while the ancients of the Church must beyond doubt or challenge have led such a life!

But little ....love. The definition of solitude must be extended; where there is not real fellowship and sympathy, it is a desert, or a solitude, however many people are there together.

'Magna civitas, magna solitudo': 'great state (or community), great solitude': the bigger the city, the more alone you are in it.

PAGE 5. **he taketh it of,** he inherits it from. As a man is said to inherit a characteristic from one parent or the other, so we inherit the capacity for friendship from the human or higher element in our composition, and incapacity for friendship from the lower or bestial part: mankind being compounded of a higher and a lower nature.

ease and discharge, easing and discharging.

receipt, prescription.

civil, as opposed here to ecclesiastical or priestly.

shrift, absolution from sins by the practice of confession.

as, that. This trick of speech, already old-fashioned in Bacon's day, is repeated a great many times in this essay.

except, unless.

sorteth to inconvenience: allies itself to, tends towards, what is not convenient. Almost certainly this is purposely vague language: he hints that such friendships tend to, or at least lend themsleves to the suspicion of, impropriety.

privado, Spanish form of privato: in the use of the word 'favourite' it is implied that he depends on the prince's favour of grace, while in the use of 'private' it is implied that he is the bosom friend with whom he lives (or the confidential sharer of his thoughts: but 'conversation' is more likely to mean **habitual way of life** than as nowadays talk)

thereof, of them: of such persons.

participes curarum, sharers of anxieties.

PAGE 6. **received**: customary, accepted as correct or usual.

L Sylla. From this point onwards Bacon overflows with instances and overloads the essay. Towards the end of this

paragraph he adds two points: that even selfish and self-sufficient men like these required friends; and that having wives and families could not supply the place of friendship.

'Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi,' I did not keep these things hidden, because you and I are such friends.

PAGE 8. **in truth of operation**, in certainty or reliability of effect; you can rely on it to do good, like the alchymists' ideal medicine, even when producing contrary effects.

praying-in aid: construe the words as thus joined. **To pray in** is to invite in or beg to come in, to invoke.

The second fruit...... Bacon has at last concluded the portion dealing with the 'first fruit of friendship,' namely the 'opening of the mind' and consequent relief of the emotions. Now the 'second fruit' is divided at once into two parts; besides advice, which any fool would at once think of for it 'lieth open and falleth within vulgar observation'), you get from your friend a kind of clearing of your own thoughts to yourself, and you sharpen your wits on him. This he puts first.

sovereign, in the sense in which a 'sovereign remedy' was believed in,—a king of remedies, potent over all diseases,—not only by the alchymists but by generations after them in the West, and by many still in the East. The full meaning was scarcely kept, people gradually coming to say **'sovereign'** as high praise for a medicine, and also 'sovereign for the rheum', 'sovereign for the liver', and so on.
restrained, we should say 'restricted.'

PAGE 9. **relate himself:** tell all his inmost thoughts, talk to it.
faithful counsel. Now for the second part of the second fruit: advice or counsel. **Faithful,** sincere, true, conscientious. The rest of this paragraph is again overloaded with ideas and becomes involved and difficult. 'Counsel' is subdivided into two sorts. (i Manners can be corrected by a friend, and better by a friend than in any other way. (ii) Business matters go all the better for a real friend's advice, though some men are so sure of themselves, so self-sufficient, that they refuse to belive what is obvious.

PAGE 9. **the best receipt (best I say to work and best to take).** I prescribe this medicine—a friend's advice—because it has both the best results and the nicest taste!

PAGE 10. **As for business......** These self-sufficient men are stupid enough to deny anything; they will contradict obvious truths. such as 'two heads are better than one'—— 'The looker-on sees most of the game'—and so on

that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters. If you are angry, repeat the alphabet before you utter a word. The English alphabet has 26 letters: but there were 24 in the Roman alphabet, which had no *K* or *W*.

two dangers: the other man may (i) mislead you intentionally or (ii) advice wrongly because he does not know your nature well enough, or your circumstances. A friend would not fail you in either of these ways, so go to your friend, not to one man here and one there.

PAGE 11. **After these two......** Bacon feels he has been long-winded and made too many distinctions: notice how he summarises again the much-divided 'second fruit' as 'support of the judgment.' This includes counsel on manners and on business and the sharpening of the wit from having a friend to talk to. Now comes the third 'fruit': help in general. Declining the prospect of entering into the countless sub-divisions of this 'pomegranate', he says to you, 'cast and see'—*i.e.*, reflect and see—how many things there are that you can't do but a friend can do for you.

blushing, transitively used, 'shaming', unbecoming, putting to the blush: yet used as an adjective, unbecoming, unseemly.

PAGE 12. **to his enemy but upon terms. Upon terms** here means 'in a stilted way', with constraint and difficulty, because ordinary freedom of language would be sure to cause misunderstanding.

I have given .....stage. I have told you what the general idea of my 'third fruit' is, namely that there are certain things that without a friend a man cannot do at all. Where he cannot do a thing himself but another might do it for him, then without a friend – finis.

A full stop after 'rule,' however, would really improve he close.

III

OF AMBITION

PAGE 13. **For if......with them.** In condensing the thought to epigrammatic shortness, Bacon obscures his meaning, but the general idea shines out clearly—they will ruin others besides themselves. The ambitious man who is stopped when he has gone far in the prince's or country's service, will act so as to bring down his employer as well as himself in a common fall. Bacon might have in mind

Alcibiades, who chose to ruin Athens because he was not promoted to the height of his ambition.

With their service=with the time spent in serving the employer: **make their service fall**, *i.e.*, the employer and the employment.

dispenseth with, excuses: the usefulness of their service excuses their other faults.

to take a soldier... spurs. This epigram is not at all clear. If a soldier lacking ambition were meant, the mistake would be in taking him at all: if to take the soldier, but leave his ambition behind, is meant, then it is like sending him without his spurs, but it does not seem that anyone would think it practicable to take a man without his character. The sentence is very slipshod: but when you consider the spurs, it is worse still. To send a General without his spurs would only be to send him badly uniformed. But Bacon evidently meant to send him without a spur (in the metaphorical sense) to prick him on; not without the spurs to prick his horse.

Curiously enough Shakespeare, in the very relevant passage of Macbeth, also got entangled, though he 'pricked the sides of his intent' correctly enough:

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, except
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

PAGE 14. **Seeled**, having its eyelids sewn up.

No man will take that part except...... Your ambitious man is as a rule not very far-sighted, in fact rather a fool: and no one is silly enough to do the dirty work of princes and take the odium or the risk, unless he is blindly ambitious. The argument is weak. Ambitious men are generally clever and cool: and ambition would not lead men to 'take that part' half so readily as avarice or other qualities.

The whole of the following argument shows Bacon at his weakest. It is Machiavellian: but a prince would hardly find any solid advice in a page of it.

there resteth to speak, it remains to be said; I now have to explain.

animate and inure, incite and accustom.

As for the having them obnoxious...... Very vague. As for the plan that some princes adopt) of having them liable to ruin. One may suppose that the prince has contrived

matters so that if he falls the plotter is also ruined. Consequently if your ambitious favourite is a strong man he may take the risk and take it the sooner.

As for the pulling them down...... Very deep and Machiavellian. If it seems necessary to pounce on the great man and yet to be quite secure in doing so, to prepare an ambush which he will never suspect, you must keep him see-sawing in his place for a bit first, now up in your good graces, now down; then summon him, with your handcuffs ready, and he will walk into the trap like a mouse.

Of ambitions, it is less harmful...... Bacon gets back to happier ground, where he resumes his favourite drawing of distinctions between different sets of circumstances.

Better the man who says to himself 'I'll be Lord Mayor of London or Chancellor of the Exchequer,' than the meddlesome all-round fellow who wants to shine in everything: but yet, it is better to have the ambitious fellow in the thick of business affairs than to let him devote himself to bringing everybody about him into dependence on him. The last is a cunning form of ambition by which some men have risen (much after the fashion, to tell the truth, of the prince on the last page, who contrived to have the favourite's interests depend on his own—but on a larger scale and with more cleverness). It is the method of the man who secures his own position at every step as he rises: and it makes everyone the slave of himself and his evil methods, so that it rots the whole fabric of society.

PAGE 15. **Great in dependences,** great in the number of dependents or 'creatures' he has about him. (It is the financier, weaving a web of economic dependence, who does this most thoroughly; the finance ministers of despots have done it in some cases to perfection.)

The rise of your Dick Whittingtons by healthy competition does good to society: but the rise of this Jew is 'the decay of a whole age.'

Honour. The getting of honour, the rise to high position. What is 'place' or position, that we should desire it? Bacon gives the reply, putting the advantages in order of merit. First, the opportunity of doing good. Second, the mixing with the great men of the world. Third, one's personal benefit and wealth.

discern of, the **of** is important: draw the necessary distinction between,—observe which of these intentions the ambitious subject has; in general, judge of the motives of all aspirants.

are more sensible of duty than of rising: think more of doing their job well than of getting on to a higher post.

upon conscience than upon bravery; sincerely, rather than to make a fine show.

busy, restless, meddlesome: it is not always easy to recognise that this fellow does lots of work only because the worm of ambition and discontent is gnawing him. The 'willing mind' is here made the type of the dutiful and sincere servant of the State.

The best parts of this essay are the opening and the close.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Abraham Cowley, 1618—1667: a contemporary of Milton: was educated at Westminster School and Cambridge: poet, literary student and critic: secretary to Lord Jermyn, a Royalist in the Queen's confidence: went to France, 1646, shared the exile of the royal court during the Commonwealth, and did not finally return till 1656. Wrote poems from the age of thirteen and was already eagerly read at eighteen. Very fond of the Latin poets, Horace, Virgil, Ovid, Martial, etc. Not now much read: among his works are THE MISTRESS (love-poems, and many poems on Latin models, odes, etc. Prose: his Essays. His poems have, however, been commended by Wordsworth, and his essays by Lamb.

IV

OF MYSELF

PAGE 16. **nice**, delicate, on which one has to be careful.

in this kind '*i. e.*' by self-praise.

they—my mind, my body and my fortune.

scandalous, or remarkable ; 'scandalous' tends to have merely the sense of 'notorious': but it meant 'so bad as to give offence (and becomes an offence to everybody)'.

likelier thereby to fall into the contempt...... because in other essays he praises 'littleness' and disowns any taste for grandeur.

PAGE 17. **to learn without book,** *i. e.*, so as to know without book; to learn off.

dispensed with, excused.

which I confess I wonder at myself, which, I confess, I myself wonder at.

PAGE 18. **the conclusion is taken out of Horace.** Not actually translated, however, but paraphrased; or the same ideas poetically treated in English. Cowley adored Horace, whom he resembled in his unambitious disposition and loved paraphrasing; never translating, because the ideas were too much his own.

this love, of poetry.

of devotion, of prayer or on religious subjects.

brave houses, fine castles or palaces.

my understanding had little...... It was not that I read Spenser with real understanding of his meaning; the allegory I did not understand, but my young mind loved the stories of these things; and then, no doubt gradually, the sound began to exert a spell upon me.

PAGE 19. **upon letters,** upon things literary, not practically.

that violent public storm, the events of 1642—49, the rise of the Commonwealth under Cromwell, which resulted in the flight into exile of many Royalist families, including the one in which Cowley was employed.

the princely cedars and the hyssop: both from the Bible—the extremes of greatness and meanness in the flora of Palestine: the cedar of Lebanon, one of the most famous of ancient trees,—the hyssop, a scrub plant used to make a purgative.

I was cast...... Cowley was employed by Henry Jermyn, Lord St. Albans. The 'princess' was Queen Henrietta.

into much company, engaged into: this use of **engaged** is common in English of the 17th century.

militant and triumphant, a catch phrase. "The Church militant and the Church triumphant" was originally a distinction: the Christian Church being militant while it had to defend itself in the world or fight the forces of sin, but triumphant only in Heaven, or on the coming of Christ again to renew the world and destroy sin.

The English royalist nobles, though not engaged in a struggle to recover their rights in England, were employing themselves in the service of the French King. The French were winning victories: and great French and English nobles could be seen in military greatness and magnificence, as a daily spectacle.

condition, position, rank.

PAGE 20. **Well then,** etc. The sentiment of his verses was: 'though living in luxury, I cannot become reconciled to living in a busy city.' He means Paris.

from his Majesty's happy restoration, *i.e.*, in looking forward to it; my hope was that when His Majesty Charles II should be restored I should be able to compass (achieve) a country house not too far from London: and I had as much justification as others in their hopes; in fact others with less claim have attained much more.

pretences, claims, pretensions.

Apollo: it might seem immodest to claim inspiration by the god of song and the lyre; I claim it only as having been a true prophet (Apollo also gave oracles), not as being a first-class poet.

a corps perdu, lit. 'with lost body,' giving oneself up for lost as in a forlorn hope, and so fighting desperately.

capitulations, conditions expressed in clauses; especially of surrender, bargaining for personal safety. Without assuring himself regarding the consequences, he determined to have his quiet retreat at all costs.

Non ego perfidum...... (from Horace): 'No faithless oath is this I've sworn': to have my life of literary ease This mistress he has 'loved so long, and now at last married.'

PAGE 21. **a very petty ejaculation,** referring back to the complaint (before the quotation) that 'she' has neither made me rich nor given me complete peace. I am ashamed of the meanness that made me exclaim against her.

quantum sufficit, or **quant, suff.** 'as much as is enough'; because doctors write this in prescriptions, *e.g.*, water as much as is necessary to make a mixture.

Let this estate...... To achieve the best happiness, it should be an ancestral property.

gratitude, in the shape of the return made by it: it should give enough profit to be worth putting good work into.

vestal flame: always kept alight. The Vestal Virgins had to keep fire always alight in the temple of Vesta, who, again, was the goddess of the hearth.

composition, mixture.

Ana, 'the same', 'the same again', an abbreviation used by doctors in prescriptions: here 'equal amounts'.

PAGE 22. **the last,** sc. hour, Death.

This second 'set of verses,' after line 8, contrasts the country retreat with city life in Rome.

a moderate rate doth bear : is moderately priced. With the next line, this explains the content to be found among farmers ; their ideal of happiness being modest and moderate, they have 'plenty' though 'poor' They have every real substantial comfort that the weathly can have.

In Rome the 'house' has to pay expensively to maintain its gardens and grounds : these add tremendously to the expense of keeping a 'villa'

Here even hunger's dear, even to half-feed yourself is expensive : you are not even allowed to be hungry except at high charges. As for plenty, a Barmecide's property is swallowed up in maintaining a plentiful table !

RICHARD STEELE

Richard Steele, 1672—1729 : educated at Charterhouse School and Oxford : gave up Oxford for the army, and the army for a court appointment ; then took to a literary career. First edited **The Tatler**, 1709-10, then with Addison, **The Spectator**, 1710—12, then **The Guardian**, 1713. Wrote comedies : sat in Parliament : knighted and given various offices by the Whig Government.

V

The Spectator Club

[From the second number of **The Spectator**.]

Page 24. **Ast alii sex......** 'But other six and more shout with one voice...' A whimsical quotation, as he is going to describe six original members of the 'Spectator Club' who are all his friends.

parts, accomplishments.

Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege : noted for their wild pranks, bets and duels : Dawson, a lower type of fellow living the same kind of life ; but **bully** in those days meant especially a seeker of quarrels who would force you to a duel and kill you if possible.

Page 25 **never dressed**, never dressed fashionably.

which......has been in and out : coats and doublets of that

cut have been out of fashion, and in fashion again, 'a dozen times.'

such a mirthful cast...... He is too jolly to be dignified; and everybody likes him, rather than looks up to him with respect.

When he comes into a house......visit. Even while the servant is conducting him upstairs to the drawing-room to call on the people of the house, he talks and chats all the way.

of the quorum, of the bench, which must have a fixed number of justices attending justices of the peace: *i.e.*, honorary magistrates).

He was placed there......stage. He knows more about the laws that govern drama than about Law Aristotle on the art of tragedy or comedy—or Latin translations from Aristotle—he does know; but the famous lawyers of our land, Littleton or Coke on English law, have left no impression on him. So when his father refers questions of law to him, he gets an attorney to write out all the answers and in fact make out the whole correspondence necessary.

PAGE 26. **in the lump**, *i.e.*, including extracts, forms or papers required—he bothers personally with none of it, getting an attorney whom he pays for the purpose to put up the whole budget and take the trouble off him.

the passions, abstract studies delight him: no doubt more Aristotle. Aristotle wrote on the passions as a part of physiology. But law deals with the results in the courts when men act on their passions. Classical studies delight him: he knows what Demosthenes and Cicero urged in their pleadings, because he reads Greek and Latin, but he knows no English case law.

occurs to him, meets him, passes before him in his experience.

the time of the play. People dined at four and the theatres opened at six in those days.

takes a turn at Will's, takes a hand at whist or dominoes at Will's coffee-house to pass the time till the theatre opens. Dryden frequented Will's.

The Rose, a tavern probably situated at the end of a court, a little off the street.

PAGE 27. **we should gain from......** By improving such and such a trade or manufacture we should beat or get ahead of the Germans, by another, the French; and so on: proving that as important victories could be got in trade

as by war. These 'pacifist' opinions must have been harder to maintain then than now: Sir Andrew was an economist before his time. Steele of course perceives the truths he hints at himself: but would only dare to set them down under Sir Andrew's name.

A general trader......scholar. It will be interesting to try whether you can reconcile this with the statement about the last gentleman :—'As few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation'

PAGE 28. **because he was not fit for it.** Captain Sentry would not push himself forward: he had not the 'impudence,' or the natural disposition to do so. However, senior officers can't see you if you don't push yourself forward, he admits: and so you must either remain obscure, or if you have a real ambition to rise high in the Army, you must help Army Headquarters to see you and at the same time help them to get rid of your less genuine competitors—if you know you can do the job and they can't why you are doing the right thing. 'I'm not a military coward or a coward in action,' says he; 'but I'am a civil coward, when it comes to the office job of pressing one's claims at Headquaters."

humorists: cranks, people of a humour.

PAGE 29. **traces on his brain**: of cares and troubles.

in all these important relations...... He is telling you, say, that as Monmouth came into the room Lady So-and-so was plainly seen to be smitten by his appearance—"and Lady Some-other, who was talking to me, tapped me with her fan and said so-and-so"—this is the kind of incident he always manages to introduce into his stories. 'Mother of the present Lord—' because he is of such an age that his beauties were the beauties of the last generation, or farther back still. Relations—narrations, stories.

PAGE 30. **the most exact good breeding;** perfect manners, taste and tact.

preferments in his function, promotions in his work or profession, higher Church appointments.

chamber-counsellor. Some barristers, from shyness or other reasons, avoid appearing in court, and only practise by giving advice "in chambers"

divines......divine topic. Within a few lines we have the word '**divine**' used to mean a person in holy orders, a clergyman, and to mean 'religious,' having to do with religion. **Divine topics** would include the immortality of the soul, the life after death, etc.

He seldom introduces...... That is, he waits for a lead

from other; he never lectures us as a duty; but when we come round to a subject which is in his line we like to hear him on it, because he is very convincing.

VI

MR. SPECTATOR ON HIMSELF.

[From the 4th number of **The Sepectator**, March 5th, 1711.]

There is more difficulty than usual in following the train of thought in this piece. Addison in his turn, a week later, wrote an article called "The Aim of the Spectator," which forms an interesting parallel, and touches on one or two of the same points, but is much clearer.

PAGE 31. **Three days.** The first three days of the publication of the 'Spectator' were 1st, 2nd and 3rd March 1711: 4th March was Sunday. Paragraphs 1 and 2 run thus, (to make the train of ideas clearer):—

I have had three days to see how this paper was received by the public (A new author thinks everyone is talking about him). Some nice things and some rude things have been said: and I have come across two sorts of people who have not much opinion at all—the first, the people who take all their opinions from others, either from men or from the nowspapers, and these are easy to please): the second, those who have no taste for this sort of reading matter, and merely skim it, but can't take it in. Very likely they pick out the names of men I write about, as if they were viewing a kind of procession; and then turn away.

However, I soon thought it useless to try to find out what people liked and how to please them: let them take me as they will, I have merely to be a conscientious newspaper.

the species, mankind, the human species.

mere blanks......at a stand. They have no minds of their own, and their point of view for the day depends on whom they meet first and what opinion he gives; or the newspaper they read first, and its opinions. Their tongues only get going when they have heard the 'talk of the town.' If you tried them at 9 A.M. you would find they could not give an opinion on anything!

they desire no more in anything than to be new, to be agreeable. All they ask for in anything is that it shall be new, agreeable: if it is, they are content.

incapacity; this word is too much used now in the sense of **general** incapacity or want of ability: but **capacity** means ability **to take** and should be followed by the particular thing meant: as **incapacity for friendship, incapacity for rule.** Here he means they are unable to take **me**, the 'Spectator'; I cannot find a place in their brains. Their inability to read me is distressing: they will look the paper over to see what it is all **about**, but not to read what I have to say.

PAGE 32. **It is an endless......do.** You can't please everybody, it is waste of time to try: the author can only do his best.

In this third paragraph the first sentence seems to belong rather to what went before, and after it the writer rapidly darts off in a new direction. The only connection seems to lie in the thought that while trying to court the good opinion of others, you cannot produce the impression you want: you are so often misunderstood. I find myself surprisingly misunderstood. 'I was once thought to be a Jesuit—and shunned by the company in consequence—because of my habitual silence.' From this very slight connecting link he now begins to set forth his portrait of 'The Spectator' as a silent man who moves amongst men observing them: 'silence is thought to go with solitude, but real solitude is in cities and in crowds': he develops this theme from this paragraph to the end, and says that first observation of mankind, and then observation of his own thoughts about them, are his chief pleasures. 'Like one who is dumb, I have keen sight'......'I shall tell men what I think of them, and set high ideals before women and before the young; and I shall be not an idle but a busy Spectator.'

with no one breathing, emphatic: not a single living soul.

taken up: this could mean 'arrested,' and perhaps the author meant it so. All Jesuits were regarded as treasonable plotters, being the active, intriguing and secretive section of Roman Catholics. 'Taken up' can however mean merely 'taken' by the company present, *i e.*, mistaken. To take something up wrongly is to mistake.

not to make a figure, not to attract attention. not to show himself.

than he possibly could in his closet: the lover, etc. There is an illustration here but not a proof: one might reply that the silent gentleman who has no entanglement with worldly affairs would find quiet in retirement, even if lovers, misers or ambitious statesmen cannot.

a worse crowd : thoughts can be more worrying than people, and the lover separated from his beloved, the miser from his gold, the ambitious man from his career and pursuit of power, are tormented by a crowd of miseries.

With the sage : possibly the writer did not himself know whom he was quoting ; the remark was made by Cicero, among others, in praise of retirement. 'I am not bored when alone ; I have the company of my thoughts.'

insignificant : meaningless, a mere nothing to them ; they attach no associations to me, the sight of me does not make them think of anything 'I have neither a distinguished name nor a distinguished appearance.'

visible, obvious, clear to everybody.

gratify the vanity ; he does so merely by being one of the lookers-on ; these vain people like an audience, a crowd of gazers, and I am one, at least, whom they can see to be a mere spectator and not a rival.

public obscurity, a contradiction in terms, softened by the writer in putting 'this public sort of obscurity.' To be a mere nonentity in the company in which I sit or stand : to be as solitary and unknown as a hermit, though in the midst of crowds : this is my chosen part.

distastes, unpleasant remarks of others that sting, that are distasteful. The opposite of 'gratifications' above.

PAGE 33. **You are the first ever asked ;** omission of 'that' --a grammatical point in which present usage differs : we never omit 'that' when it is a **nominative** relative and necessary as subject in its clause : We do omit it when it is the object, as, 'the man (that) I saw.'

It is from hence...... Hence it comes that I do not let myself judge persons according to their fortune ; I am not partial to anyone merely because he is fortunate and prosperous, nor unfair to any because he is in straits or troubles.

concurrent, agreeing ; here he means 'correctly matching my thoughts,' *i.e.*, they **say** just what I **meant** by my smile. And again, they '**argue** to' (criticise) the very point I meant when I shook my head as a sign of finding fault (with, say, the drama being acted before us).

A piece of 'thought-reading' by Will Honeycomb follows, as illustration : it is amusingly elaborate. Steele is guilty of 'padding,' as it is called—filling out his article with these extras.

PAGE 34. **for though......I allow a beauty** ...' True, if you praise a wit for his words, you must praise a girl for her dress : but if there has been any copying (plagiarism) in either case, the merit is lost.'

plagiary, one who borrows another's idea or words and pretends they are his own; a literary thief.

spoke what I looked, read my thoughts, translating my look into words.

you who dare, meaning that a guilty person would be ashamed to look at so noble and innocent a face.

chastised, we would say 'chastened.' But the two forms, of exactly equivalent meaning by derivation, have come down side by side. In the Bible **to chasten** is to punish Nowadays **to chastise** is to punish. " Where older writers said ' **chastise** ' and we say '**chasten**,' the meaning is 'to make less bold' as a person taught by experience of trouble to avoid sin) : 'to subdue, make softer.' Both mean 'to purify,' in their original sense

What a bloom in that person! Person is body : ' the bloom of youth is all about her.'

Her air has the beauty of motion. Obscurely worded : but he means, she has a noble carriage, even sitting ; she does not need to **move** to let you see that. We rather expect to see this only when a woman walks.

It was prudence......because I was sure to fall in love and make a fool of myself if I went on gazing.

PAGE 35. **the lump,** the mass, the majority.

and move......**pictures of pictures.** A person without 'soul' or without ' animation ' is said to be but a picture, a semblance of a human being. Portraits of undistinguished people, in whose faces nobility of character does not appear, are therefore doubly a shadow--pictures *of* pictures. Most women are empty and silly and show it in their faces; they do not move my admiration, my keen glance sees nothing attractive in them.

commerce of discourse : **commerce** then meant ' intercourse ' or 'communication' ; **discourse**, talk. By ' the commerce of discourse' the writer means general talk in parties when more than two or three are present.

As my pleasures are almost wholly.. fair sex. It would be a disaster for me if my dumbness lost me the favour or company of ladies : because their beauty is one of the chief pleasures of the sight, and I have to depend on sight for my pleasures. But luckily I find they like me : I am too silent to flatter, it is true, but I am also too silent to be contradictory or rude in argument.

and are, by the just complaisance.....That is, they are by the politeness of Englishmen admitted to be the more powerful half, **Complaisance**, *i. e.*, we are good-natured

enough to yield this point; **gallantry**, we are polite enough, and chivalrous enough toward the Sex, to yie'd it. **Just** complaisance and gallantry; **just** adds the writer's opinion, that this is due and proper.

these my speculations; the daily expression of my thoughts in this my newspaper. Sometimes it will be a 'Woman's Day'; on that day the newspaper will be particularly devoted to women's interests.

When I say this...... The words 'suitable to women's understanding' don't mean that the style and the ideas will have to be brought **down** to woman's level, but **up!** I will choose higher, perhaps even harder, not lower and easier matters for their reading. (Hard matters need not be in hard language).

Sentences, pompous sentiments expressed in big words: what we would call 'sententious' utterances. The adjective **sententious** has kept the meaning which the much-used word 'sentence' has lost (Latin **sententia**, an opinion, especially a resolution passed by an assembly, or the opinion of a statesman or philosopher, expressed in a speech.)

In a word...... Steele knows he has flown too high with his last compliment to women; now he has to climb down gently. 'Tea-table talk' is much the same as very ordinary gossip; he saves it by the word 'reasonable' women—which will suit everybody's claim! The following sentences declare unblushingly that he knows what women want to talk about:—men!

PAGE 36. **false protestations......by glances;** pretence and coquetry are not included in this; only real lovers' secret glances will be considered sacred by me.

'For the rest, my newspaper will be harder on men for falsehood in love, for crimes against this noblest element of life, than for any other mistakes or offences.'

JOSEPH ADDISON

Joseph Addison, 1672—1719: also educated at Charterhouse and Oxford. Travelled abroad to qualify for public service: turned to literature. Held Government appointments, and became Secretary for Ireland. From boyhood a great friend of Steele, and like him, a Whig; respected and liked by all who knew him for his moderation and gentleness.

VII

Sir Roger at Home

(from No 106 of **The Spectator.**)

Page 37. **form several of my ensuing speculations,** write down some of my next thoughts for publication ; *i. e.*, compose some more articles for the **Spectator.**

Page 38. **Valet-de-chambre**, 'bearer': bedroom-servant [Fr.]

privy-counsellor; we spell it **privy-councillor,** because a member of the King's Privy Council.

pad, a riding-pony for riding on business or journeys. 'Hack' has partly taken its place.

ancient: the word is much stronger than 'old.'

is pleasant upon ; makes fun of, 'jokes with any of the servants. He does this so good-humouredly that the one he is laughing at joins as heartily in the laugh as the others who are standing round.

Concern, anxiety.

Page 39 **in the nature of,** we would say 'in the capacity of.' The other is more used in the vague phrases 'something in the nature of,' 'somewhat in the nature of,' which mean by no means exactly such, but distantly resembling it. Here it is quite exact and not vague: the man's condition or position is that of private chaplain: unless there is meant also a hint that people like Sir Roger do not as a rule keep private chaplains, who are rather an appendage for dukes or royalties--but Sir Roger's kindness of heart led him to cover his charity with a title, so he called him his chaplain:--this interpretation is borne out by the description of his further dealings.

humorist: see Essay V: it does not mean that he has a perception of what is amusing; only that he has 'humours,' or capricious or eccentric ideas. These no doubt provide fun for other people. But 'humour' then had nothing to do with 'fun.'

more delightful...... Addison holds that his 'old friend' has as much sense and virtue as anyone, but the quaint things he says and does are merely exaggerations of benevolence and justice in his behaviour; he does not stop at the limits which convention fixes. He is unworldly: he does not know that people would laugh at his idea that he would be 'insulted' by someone using quotations from Latin, etc., at his table; or at his getting a clergyman and not allowing him to preach his own sermons.

I have given him the parsonage of the parish. He had first employed this clergyman as a kind of private chaplain, but now in addition he gave him the charge of the parish. The parish, with its church, is the care of a 'parson': the post has its salary provided from the revenue of land or some such endowment, but the gift or 'patronage' of the post is in the power of the local landowning 'squire,' who as patron may 'present to the living' anyone he likes. Sir Roger was the chief landowner there, and 'patron' with regard to the parish Parsonage here means the post of parson; it is commonly found nowadays to mean his house

PAGE 40. **At his first settling with me:** settling might mean 'coming to terms,' but I prefer to think it means 'settling down,' beginning to live.

Sermons. It was amusing that Sir Roger should assume that no clergyman would want to take the trouble of writing a sermon himself! but Sir Roger's motive was pure benevolence, though its effect was to make sure that he would not hear bad sermons. 'My dear fellow'—he said to him—'don't bother to preach—just pronounce one of these every Sunday.'

who preached to-morrow. 'Well, my dear fellow' Sir Roger would say—'who preaches to-morrow?' *i.e.* 'whose sermon is it that you have to recite [pronounce] to-morrow?'

PAGE 41. **I could heartily wish......** Addison ends by drawing a moral. What lots of bad sermons are preached every Sunday in various churches! why not copy Sir Roger's plan?

elocution, and all those......proper to enforce...... Besides elocution, or the art of speaking, he may mean gestures; a good appearance;—it is not easy to imagine what more they could cultivate to 'enforce' or convey with impressiveness the sermons of others. The improvement of the voice, of the style of speaking,—even gesture itself,—elocution is generally held to include these. Addison is vague: let them pen nothing themselves, but use all the necessary means to recite well what greater men have penned.

VIII.

SIR ROGER AT CHURCH

[From **The Spectator**, No. 112]

PAGE 42. **indifferent.** trivial; small everyday matters.

after sermon or before the bell rings: he puts the second first, because 'after sermon' is the time for *most*

people to meet and talk. A few come early and do it before: not so regularly.

texts: these sentences from the Bible would be inscribed round the walls, below the windows or in any suitable place.

of his own choosing: Sir Roger's interest in religion is not confined to mere giving of money.

pulpit-cloth, for the reading-desk; for the Bible to rest on.

Communion is the breaking of bread and partaking of wine together according to the rite laid down by Christ: it follows the model of Christ's last supper with his disciples: but it is customary—in the Church of England—to partake kneeling. Sir Roger had put wooden rails round that part of the church, fencing it off as sacred.

PAGE 43. **hassock**, a small oblong stool, soft to kneel upon, provided in churches

itinerant, going about: redundant perhaps here, but it is opposed to one practising his profession in one fixed place.

value themselves.........and outdo......... They chant or sing the Psalms of David better than it is done in other churches, and are proud of it.

As Sir Roger is landlord ... All the regular attenders of the church services are his tenants

particularities: peculiarities, but the word used is milder in effect.

the matter of his devotion, the words of the prayer he is saying.

PAGE 44 **are not polite enough**, do not belong to that higher (and rather worldly) society which would criticise such actions.

foils. Foil originally means leaf: either natural plant leaf; or beaten gold, silver or tin leaf: it comes to mean the beaten gold behind the stone of a ring, which 'sets it off,' *i.e.*, makes the stone show better. Then the background is a foil to the picture, as dark to light; and so on. A contrasting material or a contrasting quality, which 'sets off' its opposite. Even one person may act as a 'foil' to another; as a fool to a clever man, a dunce to a wit in company.

Sir Roger's virtues shine the brighter for these littl bits of contrasting weakness or eccentricity, instead of being stained or tarnished by them.

As soon as the sermon...... This describes the old fashion—probably still surviving locally, where the land-owner and patron is some very high personage: but the inquiry for every individual is peculiarly Sir Roger's.

catechising, asking questions on theology or the Bible and making children repeat the fixed answers by heart.

flitch, a section of the animal, a considerable piece, several pounds in weight.

clerk, the reader, who assists the parson by reading the passages of the Bible, of which there are two read at each service: and also on occasion by reading prayers

Addison ends with a picture of what sometimes happens in a parish, where the 'Squire' is not so religious as he might be, and the 'parson' not so prudent as *he* might be. It forms a foil to the happy condition of Sir Roger's village and parish. Also he draws a moral: religion is thus brought into discredit, and you cannot wonder at it, for the people don't know which man to believe.

PAGE 45. **tithe-stealers**: he has put the people so much against their parson that they defraud him of part of the 'tithes' or 'tenths' of the produce of the land, which form the traditional source of the income of his post: he is dependent mainly on the tithes of the people.

his order: Order with a capital O. Every Sunday, instead of real instruction and religious discourse, the parson becomes more and more engaged in reminding his people what an important person a clergyman is, and how much the whole 'order'—the whole class—of clergymen ought to be respected. He has to keep up his dignity because the 'Squire' is doing everything he can to lower it.

to pray for him...... A dreadful threat, though this Squire would probably not care a button if he did:—to pray for him by name in church, that God might bring him back from the ways of the devil!

are very hardly brought.. ... It is hard to make the common people accept what they are told (by the parson) and observe religious duties, if they see 'Squire' and his fine friends doing the opposite and laughing at what the parson tells them.

IX

SIR ROGER AT THE ASSIZES.

(Only about one page of this delightful little sketch is about the Assizes: the way in which other things are

attached to the incident of going there, and the way in which the humanity of Sir Roger's character is drawn out, like a thread, through the piece, together make it a model of essay-writing.)

PAGE 46. **If the last interferes with the former**: a man should be upright, yet he should conform as far as possible to public opinion: he may sometimes find that these two do not agree, and in that case he should prefer uprightness to pleasing people.

there cannot be a greater satisfaction: when the two do agree, and the man feels that he has first satisfied his conscience by doing right, and then also earned approval from the public, he is truly happy.

carry, take along: it is commonly used by old writers where we would say *take*.

rid, for rode.

PAGE 47. **He is just within the Game Act**: *i.e.*, his income and standing are just sufficient under the Game Act to entitle him to use a gun: £100 a year being the qualification at that time.

cheaper than those...... Sir Roger sees that there are hard cases, as there always are under legal limitations. It is rather hard luck for a man whose income is £98 per annum to be debarred from using a gun, because he needs to live more cheaply than the other and yet he sees the other (the 'yeoman of £100') living more cheaply than himself because he can shoot game.

He would be a good neighbour if......... Sir Roger pretends, good-humouredly, to curse the fellow for shooting so many partridges, as there are fewer for himself.

shoots flying. Some of the farmers who have no idea of sport will shoot sitting birds. This yeoman, though not richer than they, is 'a sportsman and a gentleman', for he doesn't do that.

foreman of the petty-jury. The foreman of the twelve jurymen speaks for them all when they are asked for their verdict. A petty jury is opposed to a grand jury: a 'grand jury' is called for the more important criminal cases that are tried at assizes, *i.e.*, when the circuit judge comes on tour, while a 'petty jury' is called for trials by lesser magistrates.

Tom Touchy. The name is in character: a touchy person is one who is easily offended, sensitive to the slightest blame or disrespect. This person is not merely ready to take offence, but always goes to law and sues the offender in court. He has sued everybody in the town!

Quarter Sessions. Quarterly Court, *i.e.*, held every quarter; a bench of justices sitting.

The rogue had once the impudence......... When a man whom he had been suing happened to die, instead of letting the matter drop he went on suing the widow: this might be regarded as nothing extraordinary elsewhere, but Sir Roger took it as a matter of course that no man of decent sentiments would dream of doing such a thing.

ejectment, for debt; on order, usually, to turn a person out of his house for non-payment of rent.

a trespass in breaking..... Walking through his land would be an offence if the very smallest damage could be proved: we are to suppose that the two gentlemen had damaged the hedge ever so little in getting in or out, but a broken twig was enough for Mr. Touchy.

he has cast and been cast......... He has given and received 'throws' or 'falls'—metaphorical ones; at law. Sometimes winning, sometimes losing, his cases, he has in every case lost money to the lawyers.

going upon the old business of the willow-tree. Going to court about the old case: some case that had been as long-drawn-out as it was unimportant. A willow tree on a boundary might give rise to a case about cutting branches off it; a sufficiently trivial matter, and a good companion to the case of the hedge.

such a hole: such-and-such a pool in a stream, giving its local name Touchy interrupts Will Wimble the moment he has mentioned the place: "Mr. So-and-so might have you prosecuted for fishing in his water." It is still not very clear what dispute arises: probably Will upholds a kind of liberty for decent people who want to fish in moderation, as against strict law; while Tom is very particular about legality.

PAGE 48. **upon a round trot**: round is often used in classical English in a variety of meanings based upon 'thorough', 'leaving nothing wanting': 'to scold a person roundly', for example, or 'to tell him in round terms': different words have to be used to paraphrase it, according to the context. Sir Roger set the pace and took them all along at a brisk trot, pushing on at full trotting speed: a very natural action when listening to what he did not care much about.

determination. 'decision' is perhaps the nearest rendering of the sense. **To determine** (or **determinate**) would be to lay down the law, to pronounce in set terms his judgment. (Not **determine** and **determination** in the commonest

modern sense.) It is true, of course, that Sir Roger's decision was no decision, but it was his final word as judge or arbiter between them, and they never thought of going beyond it.

The Court. The bench was occupied by (*i*) the Judge on circuit, (*ii*) the justices of the peace (similar to honorary magistrates in India) for the county: of these Sir Roger was the senior

my friend Sir Roger was getting up to speak. There was no occasion for this: the circuit judge might if he liked take the justices' opinion, their position being then that of 'assessors': but it was a harmless piece of self-assertion by Sir Roger, whose simplicity led him to rise and address the Judge.

acquitted himself of, delivered or uttered.

PAGE 49. **indiscretion,** he had been indiscreet in putting up the sign-board without first obtaining Sir Roger's approval.

would be at the charge of it, would pay for the alteration.

aggravation, making heavier or more marked: exaggeration of the features or expression. Actually wrinkles were added to the forehead to make a frown, and the light in the eyes was made a glare; the curve of the nose, probably, was made slightly greater.

PAGE 50. **discovering,** showing.

conjuring 'I conjure thee (or adjure thee) by God, to tell me': the form used by a wizard in trying to bind a ghost or spirit to speak or prophesy: then used simply for insisting very seriously.

X

SIR ROGER AT THE THEATRE.

PAGE 51. **good Church of England comedy:** somewhat of a paradox, but uttered in all simplicity by the knight, who made sure the play was respectable and even orthodox before he went to it.

Hector's widow, Andromache: Astyanax, his son, was a young boy when Hector was killed by Achilles. (Astyanax, though referred to, did not appear in the drama, see where he is mentioned below).

Mohocks, (Mohawks). The name of a tribe of Red Indians of North America, adopted by one of the gangs of wild young men who committed excesses in the London streets at night. They were not, as Sir Roger vaguely imagines, 'black men'; and the black men he saw were doubtless paying no attention to him. Addison means to indicate that Sir Roger's knowledge of town matters was founded on the slightest and vaguest rumours, imperfectly understood.

PAGE 52. **I threw them out**, threw them off the scent, as a fox might do the hounds.

Steenkirk, in Holland.

PAGE 53. **a tragic audience**, an audience assembled at the performance of a tragedy

natural, innocent, unsophisticated: the criticism of a wholly inexperienced child. Sir Roger took the whole play as a piece of real life, as a child might : and spoke of the characters in the present tense—the more amusing in a play of the times of ancient Troy

These widows, sir...... As we were told by Steele in introducing the 'Spectator Club', he had been crossed in love by a beautiful widow of the county next to his.

PAGE 54. **a notable young** baggage : baggage had come to be a slang term for a naughty or pert girl, from 'piece of baggage' 'A remarkably smart and naughty young thing ! '

Orestes and Pylades were friends--one of the pairs whose friendship has become proverbial.

Smoke, a slang term for 'draw him on and make a fool of him.'

PAGE 55. **Pyrrhus his**, instead of 's : this inaccurate custom was older than Addison's time, and was dying out, but Addison revives it as a way of escape from an awkward word, to avcid writing Pyrrhus's

Orestes in his raving fit, when driven mad by the Furies in punishment for killing Clytemnestra.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Samuel Johnson, 1709—1734 : educated at Oxford, but left without a degree ; suffered long from poverty: famous for the first English Dictionary, and still more for his personality and talk as recorded by his companion Boswell. Wrote poems. Edited **The Rambler** and latter **The Idler.** In his writings he always lectured, and there is nothing light or entertaining in his style. For the Dictionary he got degrees

from Oxford and Dublin, and in 1760 Government granted him a pension, so that he was no longer penniless; but he was poor always because of his generosity. A friend of Goldsmith, the orator Burke, the actor Garrick and the painter Reynolds and other well-known people.

XI

Dick Minim the Critic.

(This essay, intended to be a satire, fails of its object. Johnson's standards were not those of ordinary men, and the majority could not laugh at what he laughs at. Dick Minim, as he portrays him, only comes into the common condemnation that a majority of men would have suffered with Johnson as judge: his faults are ordinary, and what Johnson wants to ridicule him for is nothing very definite. He neither clearly exposes a want of ability in him, nor a want of honesty, nor idleness, nor even dullness. Johnson should have been thorough and violent in denunciation or merciless in his satire to convince us: his attempt to demolish Minim by gentle satire is a failure. In language, however, this essay is simpler and more natural than much of Johnson's work: he drops his pompous heaviness here because for once he is lured away from his didactic, his lecturing style by the nature of the subject.)

Page 56. **formidable**, because a critic of repute causes young writers to tremble in fear of him.

invention......labour. By invention Johnson means the originality of genius: 'there are few born with genius, and few others take the trouble to work hard, which is the only way to other kinds of distinction.'

nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant: aimed at Minim, the victim of the piece: but the first—'natural weakness'—is vague abuse; the second is partly contradicted in his sixth paragraph. If Johnson wanted to show him idle and ignorant, he ought to have made him thoroughly so.

malignity: this word too is no better than abuse: he proves no malignity as he proceeds, in fact he contradicts himself by making Minim quite a decent fellow, timorous, cautious and not malignant.

The Critic is the only man whose triumph...... Like the paragraph which it closes, this sentence destroys the effect of the satire, which in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 is quite well introduced. If the critic is helpless to give pain or wreck a career, how is he important and formidable?

PAGE 57. **Dick Minim.** .. At the outset the writer loses touch with us. Dick is a very ordinary case : we find nothing much wrong with his early career—not even brewing, or cultivating the society of music-hall artists. The words 'learnt to scorn a trade' are a bitter sneer : but lots of us would probably have scorned a trade already without learning from second-rate actors to do so. Johnson, embittered by his own struggles and the grinding labour that had been forced on himself, looked with malignity and resentment on idleness or easy labour.

language and sentiments; and unities and catastrophes. The first is a distinction. 'I admire'—he would hear some critic say—'the author's language, but not his sentiments'—the thoughts he expresses in language.

The second is a pair of terms frequently employed in discussion of drama. The unities of the drama were laid down by Aristotle : they are unity of time, unity of place, and unity of action. Any drama should have these ; they are merely the analysis of what we mean by 'unity,' by connection : a drama must 'hang together' as one, not have scenes hopelessly out of connection with each other. Again, in tragedy, the events lead up, sometimes by many paths at once, to the 'catastrophe' which we know is bound to come, though we are not informed exactly what it will be. Sometimes, as in 'Hamlet' or 'Lear,' it is a complicated catastrophe : the critics have often much to say as to the skill with which the dramatist has 'led up to' his catastrophe, the climax of his play.

But he did not trust. . . We could have joined in scorning the victim much more heartily if he hadn't done any work. This, on the contrary, gives us a respect for him. Johnson wants to express by 'unwearied diligence' that he was a dull, plodding fellow. (Johnson scorned dullness, because he admired genius, and secretly hoped that he had it himself ; but he forgot that dullness had left a mark on his own existence, because hard work is dull though estimable.) Unfortunately, as he goes on, he drops the charge of dullness, and we hear no more of it !

was able to tell, etc. Some of the observations come from the classics, but probably through some very well-known English writer : and it would appear that one of the chief authors that 'Dick' read at Richmond was Pope. Pope said something very near to 'art is the imitation of nature,' (which comes from Seneca) : he is the author of 'the great art is the art of blotting,' for he says of Dryden :—

Even copious Dryden wanted, or forgot,
The last and greatest art, the art to blot.

(As boldly flung out by Johnson here, it loses its sense; the final perfection, to know what to blot out of your own work.)

Then, later in the essay, Minim's condemnation of rhyme has some authority from Pope.

PAGE 58. **all had beauties and defects**. Any commonplace, dull fellow could venture on saying this. In the long paragraph of examples following, he causes Minim to select small and out-of-the-way blemishes in every writer, (while acknowledging the greatness of each in every other way.)

stanzas of Spenser. Pope objects to the 'needless Alexandrine'

reformers of English numbers: numbers is the literal translation of the Latin numeri, which means verses, metre, rhythm. Sir John Denham, 1615—1669: Edmund Waller, 1606—1687.

the first lines of All for Love. The first lines of the prologue, probably, not of the play: they are:—

Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow:
He who would search for pearls, must dive below.

'All for Love' was in blank verse, but other tragedies by Dryden were in rhymed couplets.

a conspirator his hero; Pierre, the chief conspirator in Otway's 'Venice Preserved.'

the clock. Small defects, small felicities, were the province of Dick Minim as a critic: he could not, Johnson hints, discuss the main merits or defects, the deeper characteristics.

William Congreve, 1670—1729, the famous post-Restoration dramatist, who wrote brilliant comedies of fashionable life.

persons, in the original Latin sense [personæ]: characters. The conversation was too witty for Dick. The very merit of Congreve—brilliant dialogue—this poor wretch of a critic takes for a defect. The criticism would, certainly, be very inept, and justify huge scorn of Mr. Minim. Congreve is all wit and art and would be nothing otherwise.

PAGE 59. **Cato**, (1713) a drama in blank verse by Addison.

allegory, as in the Vision of Mirza, a very popular piece.

grave humour, as in the quiet and sober description of Sir Roger. He need not have read very much of Addison to come to these conclusions.

Prior......Swift......Pope. The criticisms here are meant to be commonplace—just what anyone could tell you: the word discovered is no doubt a mocking trust-discovered, (what everybody knows who knows anything)

rather luscious than sweet: over-sweet and cloying, so destroying the enjoyment with too much sugar.

Phaedra and Hippolitus: [Hippolytus, usual and correct]: a drama by Edmund Smith (1663—1710), who has not become famous.

under better regulations, probably we should use the singular, regulation: control, he means, in the way of a censorship to decide what should be permitted to appear. See later

suffrages, the Latin word for votes, anglicised.

originals, unique, eccentric people different from all their countrymen: these would be objects for laughter.

Of tragedy ... That 'business is the soul of tragedy' surely no one else could ever have said. This obscure remark either has no meaning or its meaning lies deep. Business taken back to its first sense of 'busy-ness', *i.e.*, either over-enthusiasm or over-curiosity, might serve: but on the whole I prefer business in a sense current from Bacon's day to Johnson's, of state affairs. There has always been a school of thinkers that demands great subjects for tragedy, and as the state is a greater subject than the individual, they have thought that it should always involve great historical movements or events, to heighten its grandeur. Most of us think this view wrong: it would put Coriolanus and Julius Cæsar above Hamlet or Othello: but I do not see why Dick Minim should be ridiculed for it..

and yet often hinted that love...... The connection is difficult to see. If we accept the above explanation for the first part of the sentence, we may suppose that he means: tragedy should flourish then in this age of great happenings, but love-dramas seem to flourish more than tragedies on epoch-making events [such as had been plentiful since the days of the Stuart kings, *i.e.*, for over a century]. (If we could think that eloquence, *i.e.*, great speeches, was bound up with tragedy in Johnson's mind, we might recall a proverb, old and somewhat rare, which Benham quotes in his New Book of Quotations, 1924: 'Love and business teach eloquence.')

headed a party in the pit: his followers went with him to the theatre and made themselves noticeable by applauding together when he did.

PAGE 60. **what can be more absurd......** this, certainly, is a ridiculous argument.

In these verses, says Minim...... The satire is now much better, and one can see what Johnson is getting at. Minim represents some critic who had been trying to be too clever--over-precious.

PAGE 61. Butler's **Hudibras**, a famous verse satire.

noviciate (novitiate) : the state of a novice, the period of being a novice A novice is a monk or nun in preliminary training : he transfers the term to literary apprentices.

academies of the continent. The French Academy, at least, acts as a real court to decide literary matters ; even such matters as the spelling of words the adoption of words from foreign languages, the form in which such words shall be adopted, and so on There is nothing corresponding to it in England. In Germany it is done by legislation : that too is almost unimaginable in England. The French Academy is limited to 40 members, and when one dies another is elected : it is, of course, a great honour to be elected.

PAGE 62. **nicest**, most particular and dealing with the finest distinctions.

through the great vulgar and the small. This reads like a quotation : throughout the upper and the lower circles of the public.

false delicacy. Nowadays this would mean false modesty, a regular phrase : but Johnson knew nothing of that sense : he means the same as the petty refinement, over-laboured avoidance of what is blunt and outspoken. An over-polite style arising from a false view of things.

rhyme. He is against rhyme generally, but especially in dramas ; and praises blank verse. He has the greatest authors, Shakespeare and Milton, more or less on his side

PAGE 63. **by a proper cadence** : *i. e.*, the rough sound is definitely meant to express something of a rougher kind than usual in the ideas : suiting the rhythm and fall of the accents to the subject. *Proper*, germane, allied, suitable.

something that strikes him...... The fault in Dick Minim is quite definite now--'preciousness'--trying to be cleverer than all his predecessors, to find what was not revealed to others ; and exaggerating his own appreciation of the poet's good lines.

Minim is not so confident...... Still we are on clear ground The critic bows to a great name. The same work produced by an unknown man would not gain his approval, or not at once. He can make up his mind easily to call a thing good if it is by an acknowledged genius or master : if it is not, he lives in doubt, he hesitates : inclines to find fault, until he is forced to approve because others do : and covers up his indecision in generalities, half praising and half blaming.

PAGE 64. **commodiously**, conveniently.

The last paragraph is also a fairly clear indictment of the class to which Minim is supposed to belong. His advice to the learner is so contradictory that no one could follow it. He says 'imitate So-and-so; and follow your own genius.' 'Let your genius have full play in moments of inspiration; but keep a tight rein on it.' 'Work hard, study lots; but don't read too much.' How the pupil is to reconcile these mutually annihilative suggestions, Heaven knows. Illuminating, isn't it?

Though the aim is clearer after Johnson has got well into his subject, we are left with the unfortunate impression of a rather feeble attack.

XII

The Advantages of Living in a Garret

[In The Rambler.]

(The subject of this essay, while it does not deliver Johnson from the bondage of big words, at least ensures that they are not didactically employed. As he is making fun, and quite good fun, the appearance of elegant trifling —of clothing the ridiculous in matter with the sublime in language—makes us almost forget that these full-dress terms were the ordinary stock of his literary vocabulary. The essay starts off with all that we dislike in Johnson's style: the mouth-filling Latinisms, the duplication of terms and division of every idea into two for antithesis, which strikes us like a professional strong man balancing heavy weights: but he has his jest up his sleeve, and it dawns on us towards the end of the paragraph that the mountain is labouring to bring forth a mouse.)

Page 65. **Paragraph 1** —A clever man who has evolved a new theory is chary of making it public. He is nervous at the prospect of ridicule, though it is the ignorant who mock.

and as the student......insult. If money is one's ambition, or some material gain, it enables us not to care for mere praise or blame; but when one is only working for praise, blame is a terrible disappointment—the ruin of all the hopes that kept us to our task. It is the student (meaning the man who has devoted his life to the increase of knowledge, whether in history, philosophy or science) who generally depends upon praise for his reward.

He who brings......demonstration. Here you have this student, a kind of hermit, suddenly flung into a crowd: people treat his new ideas with scorn.—'Nonsense! don't be a fool!'—'Listen to this fellow! ha! ha! ha!'—and the poor shy wretch hasn't a word to say, although he could give a perfect proof of his theory.

petulant, annoyed, angry. ('Don't be a fool!')

fortresses: he has a perfect, an irrefutable answer; but like timid generals who retire from impregnable fortresses before some enemy who has a tremendous reputation, he lets his shyness put him to silence, and is glad to escape in disgrace from the company.

mechanist, student of mechanics; the man whose researches have been in the line of dynamics, the laws of force.

the astronomer ... It is interesting to compare what Johnson knew with what we know now. All three calculations—ranked by him with such 'impossibilities' as tearing down wooden bulwarks with a silk thread—have actually been made, and are being re-made, daily in every country that can boast of civilisation. Attempts, of course, were being made in Johnson's time: we are getting in this sentence his estimate of the hopelessness of them.

I had not sheltered... ...garret He would have published his results under his own name, and not in a newspaper either—Now we come to the great scientific discovery about garrets— A garret is the small top room of a high house. It still has a ceiling over it, namely the wooden planks which supplement the rafters: the loft is on top of that—as Johnson calls it in the last world of the essay, the cock-loft—triangular in section

PAGE 66. **slight and transient strictures.** 'Writers have spoken severely, harshly of garrets; but only in passing, and without serious attention.'

nice, exact, detailed, particular.

abandoned prejudice......chance, allowed the prejudiced and ignorant mob to go on their way unguided by true knowledge: left fools to their ignorance and blindness

professors of literature, those who profess it, whose profession it is: not Professors with capital P.

flexures of Maeander; bends of the river Maeander, in Asia Minor. To the name of this river we owe the word **meander,** used in Shakespeare, Bacon, etc, always as a noun, but now only as a verb, to wind.

PAGE 67 **Tibullus,** a Roman poet

Lucretius, a Roman poet a century earlier.

looks down. Lucretius wrote metaphorically The metaphor, moreover, was not suggested to his mind by garrets : many-storied houses became general in Rome long after his time: but by the position of actual temples in Rome, which from heights of 100 to 300 feet looked down on city squares or streets.

institution, a custom well-established by long use

without knowledge of... *i. e.*, they did not know the secret which I have discovered and am about to reveal to you

PAGE 68 **the wits**, the clever fellows : as they are clever in conversation and composition, they are also smart enough to know where something can be got cheap.

most easily rented, carrying the lightest rent. They are not 'rented' so high, *i. e.*, valued at so high a rent, as other rooms.

no man rejoices......payment. The occupant finds no advantages of any other kind, but reaps the advantage when it comes to paying for his room, because all his acquaintances have to pay more.

unvariably : we use invariably or unvaryingly and one would expect Johnson to have used invariably.

still, always; in general.

PAGE 69. **promulgation**, publication 'You' means the editor, or the paper.

various compressions of the ambient element, differences of air pressure **ambient**, going round, surrounding [Latin].

Hippocrates, famous Greek physician, born about B. C. 460.

genius, intellect.

instances of local understandings, of...... The comma is followed by a fuller explanation of what he means by 'local understanding.' Some clever people are clever only in a particular locality. (Put local understanding in italics and a dash after the comma, and the connection will be clear) 'Intellect localised'—wedded to one spot—is rather an amusing sally : he might be thinking of someone who was only bright in a coffee-house or a tavern.

invention and elocution ; the powers of thought and of speech are both cited.

defecated, rather a violent Latinism for 'purified of its dregs.'

attraction, of gravity.

I have found dulness......thin ether. Ether is good ; it has the flavour of a scientific experiment, though it means only clear air. Can Johnson have meant Boswell on the top of a Scotch mountain?)

attending him, going along with him

temper. of the air: the precise mixture or composition --here the pressure.

PAGE 70. **barometrical pneumatology**, a good climax: Title of my great Work, 'Barometrical Pneumatology: a Treatise on the Correspondence between Atmospheric Pressures and the Human Spirit. By Hypertatos'

vertiginous, giddy, or causing giddiness.

acuate, sharpen: make more acute

round the centre: of the Earth.

fortune or a patron had placed him.......This is clever. It epitomises the history of many an author. No one lives in garrets after achieving fame and money; and with fame and money, it is true also, wit and genius have often declined.

PAGE 71. **from the centre**: as before, of the earth.

Bacon, Solomon's house. In Bacon's 'New Atlantis'; he describes the hills, with towns on top, as 3 miles high, and caverns 3,600 feet deep.

expansion and concentration, *i. e.*, expansion or rarefaction at a greater elevation, and concentration or condensation at a greater depth.

fume away, evaporate uselessly.

compose tables of interest; he mentions as contrary as possible an occupation: hum-drum, commercial, unimaginative drudgery, but in its way practical.

'It smells of the lamp,' *i.e.*, of the midnight oil, of nights of labour This epigrammatic expression is due to some early Greek; Plutarch says Demosthenes was taunted with it.

a sprightly sally, a sparkling piece of wit, a merry jest.

a bold figure, a striking figure of speech, say a metaphor.

PAGE 72. **an expression**...... This makes a neat and witty ending "You, Mr. Rambler, are so full of good things (in your articles) that I should be forced to exclaim constantly 'fresh from the garret!' But it would be insufficient praise: your compositions often come from a still higher level!"

Hypertatos. The signature is in keeping with the subject: it is the Greek word for highest. 'Mr. Topmost,' or 'The Man in the Garret.'

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith, 1728—1771: educated at Dublin: studied medicine but did nothing. A contemporary and friend of Johnson, but his antithesis in temperament, a light-hearted and improvident Irishman: poet and essayist, and writer of histories, a novel and plays. Well-known poems, The Traveller. The Deserted Village; essays, The Citizen of the World, plays, She Stoops to Conquer and The Good-Natured Man; novel, The Vicar of Wakefield. Garrick said of him "he wrote like an angel, but talked like Poor Poll."

XIII

AT THE PLAY

(This is one of the letters,—No. 21, written in 1762,—from the series, "The Citizen of the World," in which Goldsmith—himself an Irishman—seeks to awaken the English to the point of view of an outsider: an impartial outsider, he must be—so he calls him a citizen of no country, but of the world: and makes him, for purposes of comparison, speak as a visitor from China. See also Essay XIV.

PAGE 73. **My companion in black.** The Man in Black who appears in the letters is represented as a gentleman who politely offers to show the stranger Westminster Abbey and other places. He makes comments of a piercing kind upon things English; Goldsmith puts most of his satire into this gentleman's remarks, while the 'Chinese' or 'cosmopolitan' visitor describes in an innocent way what meets his eye.

PAGE 76 **'Now, says my companion, you perceive......'** This satirises the unnatural and unpractical aspect of the play.

buskined, wearing buskins, soft leather boots half-way up the calf of the leg. This means tragic, playing in a tragedy: the whole idea has come down to us from the early Greeks through the Romans. The 'cothurnos' (Greek for the same kind of boot was regularly worn by the actors in tragedy, and the term in Greek and Latin became an unvarying sign of tragic drama.

period: may be taken as=act or=scene. Any section of the action.

a man came in...... Apparently it was the practice to

allow what we would call 'variety turns' between the acts. Probably only because it was a tragedy all tragic, and without the relief of any comic scenes: this particular author had to call in the aid of 'variety artists' instead

one of the most important characters Of course it was not a part of the play, but it pleased the Man in Black to be hugely satirical, and to imply that the characters in this play were so insipid that the people wanted to see the straw-balancer much more than any of them: he condemns in one sweeping gibe the play, the audience and the actors. It is cleverly done.

apprehension, understanding.

a fellow possessed of talents like these: 'what is the play, and what are the actors, compared to him? He will be richer than any rotten actor'

division, used very like *period* above.

PAGE 77. **of late**. A clever hint is put into these words. 'We used to have that sort of stuff in China, but it is growing old-fashioned.' The hint means: 'it is high time we got rid of this ancient trick of conveying lumps of the plot in the form of long soliloquies: it is a trick as old as Plautus, or even Aeschylus, and in 2,000 years we ought to have learnt how to avoid it.'

mandarins are the educated and official class in China: he speaks as a Chinaman would of the superior-looking gentlemen he sees present.

Quite the reverse...... Nice light satire.

crossing: either crossing the legs, or crossing the stage:

cant word, a saying lightly bandied among them, a commonplace in the profession. Cant is a word which can be traced in English from the 15th century, but whose history and development of meaning are not so clear as could be desired. While its form inclines to the Latin, its earliest sense seems to be borrowed from the French form, the same which gives us chant. Applied to the whining, sing-song voice of beggars, then of gipsies, it next became a contemptuous word for the 'jargon' or unintelligible words used by these people, or by particular trades or professions. This, though still quite an early meaning of the word, is sufficient to explain it here. The subsequent changes import into it a sense of insincerity: a canting preacher, a canting politician, political cant, indicating that the person does not believe in what he says, but uses the stock terms of the class to which he belongs. cant is sometimes used very similarly to slang: but a cant term would be properly the slang peculiar to a class of persons

PAGE 78. **Observe the art**...... This paragraph ridicules the prevalence of fainting-fits among ladies: which in those

times had grown to be a habit; even an art! What a happy idea to use the art in tragic dramas! The silence when the actress's voice has died away is more eloquent than words! Don't we shiver in our seats? don't we tremble with the terrors of our own awakened imagination? Goldsmith is heaping scorn first upon the fainting itself, and then upon the minds that can find it appropriate on the stage when it is unnecessary.

Abigail, a regular word for a waiting-maid: taken from the Bible.

aposiopesis, the Greek word for a voice dropping away into silence, a speech cut short (for effect). Instead of merely doing it, says Goldsmith, do it with a fit—that is the way!

carpets spreading, *i.e.*, being spread: kings being received on their arrival.

racks for torture; ratsbane, for poison; everything sensational, but in ratsbane there is both alliteration and anticlimax.

'**Racks—saints being tortured—and** -rat-poison'

unaffected by the principal distress. Emphasis on principal The play is so crudely written that there is no light and shade, no working-up to a climax; and what was intended to be the most moving moment of all has no chance to move us, for we have been moved till we are exhausted already.

XIV

On National Prejudices.

There is little in this essay to comment on. It is straightforward. The medicine that Goldsmith administered was probably more sorely needed by the Englishmen of that day than it ever was before or since.

Page 80. **Sycophants**: a word which was already used by the ancient Athenians in so trite a sense that the connection or train of ideas by which it was derived was obscured to themselves. Though it has in its origin to do with 'figs' and with 'a fair show,' or 'showing,' it meant among them a base person who hung on to the skirts of prominent politicians or officials: spying, slander, informing and flattery being the methods understood. In English it takes most from the last sense: a flatterer and a sponger; one without spirit or self-respect.

PAGE 81. **gravity**, composure of features. Goldsmith was bursting with laughter.

peremptory, used of orders, tone of voice and the like: literally, cutting off: *i. e.*, cutting out all argument, reply, or question. We should perhaps render it 'positive,' 'uncompromising,' or even 'dictatorial.'

PAGE 82 **threw down my reckoning**: not usual. I'call for my reckoning,' but throw down the amount of it.

a citizen of the world. Used as a regular phrase by Bacon: its history is given further back by Cicero, who relates that Socrates called himself a 'world-citizen.'

PAGE 83. **those, I mean who have every title......but......** These who would deserve the name of gentlemen if they were exempt from prejudice. If they could get free from prejudice they would be free from this national prejudice.

CHARLES LAMB.

Charles Lamb, 1775—1834; educated at Christ's Hospital: clerk in the South Sea House and then in the India House, lived with his sister, and wrote with her Tales from Shakespeare: failed at drama, but gained fame by his essays, writing under the name of 'Elia,' which title is borne by his collected essays—the Essays of Elia They appeared first in the London Magazine from 1820. He had a life-long friendship with S. T. Coleridge, knew Wordsworth, and collected many literary men about him, including Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, etc.

XV

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN.

(In this essay we are surprised to find no disguise, scarcely even the usual light-hearted playfulness: Lamb literally narrates his own feelings and his own case, letting us see into the bitterness of his life. He became a clerk in 1789: after about 3 years he changed from the South Sea House to the East India House: and in 1825 when he retired he had indeed done 36 years of this—to him perhaps more than to another—distasteful drudgery.)

PAGE 86 **a City Sunday.** The dullness of the English Sunday has come in for special denunciation from foreigners and Englishmen, but the actual complaint of our author is one that would have existed for him in a Continental city too: and in fact, wherever the shops are shut and business suspended on Sunday.

Those eternal bells : the church bells about 11 A. M. and 6 P. M. (perhaps also 2 P. M.). An exclamation of impatience.

a week-day saunter. From the tenor of the essay one would think Lamb had never been able to indulge in walking idly about on business days : but evidently he had Most likely he took 2 hours off as dinner interval and worked normally from 10 to 1 or 2 and 3 or 4 to 8 in office : if so, he spent part of the inter al in the stroll he describes in the following sentences, but it was too short to afford him any relief.

busy faces ....the face of business. Meeting men whose faces expressed the absorption of a busy man in getting his business through The face of business, though an echo of the previous words, is purely metaphorical : business has for once a 'fair and pleasant complexion,' when you look upon it but are not doing it yourself. Compare Dekker's line,—

'Honest labour bears a lovely face' : (which Lamb could not have had in mind, otherwise he would have denounced it !).

unhappy countenances : *i. e.*, on Sunday. The people have got their leisure but don't know what to do with it : partly because there was no amusement for them to go to, and walks in city streets that are practically deserted are no pleasure

and livelily expressing .....The connection is : unhappy countenances, or half-happy at best, and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring We are eloquently informed, by their bored looks, that a mere day at a time is no enjoyment. You have to get out of the groove of labour before you can begin to have a free mind and enjoy anything.

The very strollers... Even the strollers. Not even parks or fields near the town could give relief What Lamb insists on is that one day is nothing.

indulgence : A special privilege allowed to him by the firm.

durance, bondage, prison. Generally in the poetical phrase, 'in durance vile'. which is used by Burns, and by William Kendrick (died 1777) in a play ; but probably older.

PAGE 87 **and the wood had entered into my soul**. A deliberately-marked variation of the Biblical saying, 'the iron entered into his soul.' (Psalm 105, 18).

PAGE 88 **formidable back-parlour.** A kind of board-room or director's room : evidently furnished as a sitting-room, situated at the back of the house, and not used

except on solemn or special occasions: dreaded by the clerks, as any business for which they were summoned there must be serious

to descant, a word of infrequent occurrence and curious meaning: in Milton it comes as a noun, 'a song', which is its original meaning. But to descant on a topic is to dwell on it with gusto or enjoyment: *e, g.*, a preacher discussing a favourite subject at length: or a person detailing the advantages of an arrangement in order to attract his hearer (Lamb's worthy superior dwelt long upon the propriety of a timely retirement as a general principle, out of a desire to be kind and to prevent Lamb from feeling he was no longer of use.)

PAGE 89 '**Esto perpetua**! 'May it last for ever!' The old motto of the city-state of Venice.

I could scarce trust myself with myself: I felt I was hardly fit to look after myself and go about alone.

poor man, in estate; poor in Time, who never had leisure enough

I feel it by myself, but..... 'I know it by my own feelings: namely, that there is danger of a person losing all interest in life. In general, that is: but I am not myself in danger, for I have interests of a mental kind to occupy me'

PAGE 90. '......**and has his years come to him**' Living in the same place some 'Forest of Arden'—he waits, as it were, for his life to come to him, his maturity, his age.

'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum': A simple sum in proportion: Lamb was in his mind working out the number of hours per day (excluding sleep and bodily necessities) that he used to have to himself – say 5: now add 10 which used to be wasted in drudgery: total, thrice 5: the sum was something very much like this.

Sir Robert Howard, 1626—1698

PAGE 91. **Time takes no measure in Eternity**: in Eternity, which is the true reality (and which, the poet means, may sometimes affect us, as though we were living in it, with an actual sense of it) Time, of any length, counts neither long nor short: it has no place, takes up no space, has no measure or comparison: is incommensurable with Eternity.

in the state militant. See the note on militant and triumphant Essay IV, page 233. 'Militant' on earth: 'triumphant' in Heaven Lamb gaily compares himself to a departed spirit, freed from quilldom, returning to look in upon his brethren still struggling in this lower world.

(The lightening of the style proceeds hand-in-hand with the subject, and Lamb reverts gradually from the dead seriousness of the opening to his truer vein of fancifulness.)

a Gresham or a Whittington, princely merchants ; past Lord Mayors of London : their names are preserved in streets to this day.

PAGE 92. **unhealthy......weal** : the building was airless and badly lighted, neither good for the lungs nor for the eyes of those who worked there, but he looked to it as his source of livelihood

works. Perhaps it is my drudgery that will really count as my work in the world : files I have gone through, notes or accounts that I have written or copied : not my literary compositions !

Aquinas, St Thomas Aquinas, one of the Christian 'Fathers of the Church' and a voluminous writer on theological subjects.

My mantle, I bequeath among ye The saying that one person has taken up another's mantle—or that the other's mantle has fallen upon him—comes from the Biblical incident of Elijah bequeathing his mantle and "a double portion of his spirit" to Elisha (Kings, II, 2, 9—15). Among ye : he has been addressing the building ; but turns now to his old companions again.

A fortnight has passed... Here the author resumes after leaving a break of a fortnight in writing the essay.

Carthusian : An order of monks.

cellular, of a cell, in a monk's cell

Soho, a quarter of London near the centre : still famous for stalls of all kinds But these parts of ondon where he now walks are 2 miles away from his old commercial haunts

a fine picture. in a shop window.

flints . vocal...indent . flags. Varied expressions for the treading of pavements : 'someone makes the hard stones of Mincing Lane echo : not I ! I press or mark the paving stones of Pall Mall,' a much more fashionable street The India House, however, was in Leadenhall Street : it was the South Sea House that was in Mincing Lane.

'Change Time' : The hours from say 11 to 1, when business is mostly done 'on 'Change'—at the Exchange. Lamb was probably sent often to bring reports or meet clients

the Elgin Marbles : The marble statues brought by Lord Elgin from Greece : in the British Museum.

hyperbole, (four syllables), the Greek word for over-shooting the mark : exaggeration.

PAGE 93. **the Foreign Post Days** : Two days a month, probably, at most ; one when the Indian mail went out and the other when it came in : anxiety about work would increase as letters were being got ready for the mail ; and work would come in with its arrival.

Wednesday : One of the worst days to look forward to, because furthest from Sunday : though Monday, when it actually came, was the worst 'Black' is applied to Monday —not only by Lamb but by most workers !

cantle : Technically the back part of a saddle is the cantle : probably taken here from its use for a large joint of meat ; a piece, a lump.

insult over, show insolent triumph over him, jeer at him : knowing he cannot possibly leave business to go to Windsor or anywhere else.

Lucretion pleasure : refers to the most-quoted lines of that Roman poet, which introduce one of his 'books' or divisions of his great poem on the Nature of Things Their meaning is :—

" Sweet, when the waves are churned with the winds at sea, to survey from the land another's toil and moil. "

carking and caring, a light and whimsical twisting of the words which form the real phrase, *i. e*, carking care, which means ' care that eats the heart, ' To cark and care is not an idiom—Lamb only invents it.

I verily believe : Not true literally ; it only introduces a new and surprising theory, and is a sign of a flight of fancy more than usually extravagant 'Nay indeed—I will go further and say man was not made to do anything—but to think'

PAGE 94 **those accursed cotton-mills** : In Surat, Baroch and Bombay ? The business of the India House dealt much with cotton.

I am no longer...... Lamb ends up in fine fettle—quite pleased with himself, in the matter and also in the style.

cum dignitate : understand otium to make up the phrase : otium cum dignitate ' ease with dignity', a famous old expression of an ideal. Cicero, who probably originated it, said every Roman administrator should have this.

Opus operatum est : ' My work is worked', ' I have worked my work. ' It cannot be accidental that the word opera, in the far-removed sense of a musical drama, is placed

so near. It is meant as a complete antithesis. 'Opera (amusement) for me: away with opus (work)!'

XVI

A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of the Married People.

Page 95 **anti-social resolutions**: Not to marry is anti-social; because if everybody went this way 'society' would come to an end. [Not merely unsociable.] Lamb says he remained a bachelor for other strong reasons of his own—not a case of being repelled by the bad example of quarrelsome couples. 'That is a minor matter and influences me little. I have my own reasons, far weightier ones, for not doing my social duty.'

carry this preference, wear it, display it.

perk it up.........Assert it unnecessarily. Rarely used of a thing: To perk oneself up is more correct: to erect, straighten, with the idea of impudence or conceit attached.

Page 96 **homely-featured**, a mild word for ugly, plain-featured: in America homely has kept this sense—'ugly.'

the first: *i.e.*, any, without discrimination: the first that came in his way.

putting the question: asking "Will you be my wife?"

but these admit of a palliative: These cases do give room for a kind of excuse: one can make some allowance, if one is broad-minded, and say that after all it is not so bad, some good also comes of it. To palliate a crime is to make it less gross, more forgiveable, like 'extenuating circumstances' in a court of law.

usufruct, legal word for enjoyment of possession.

unrecompensed, perhaps a slight lapse from correctness on the writer's part. To recompense is to reward: he required compensate in its meaning of 'balance,' 'set off': uncompensated. 'There is nothing to make up for it, nothing to compensate me for the insult.'

not of the least invidious sort, a most invidious one. An invidious monopoly would be one whose unfairness justly excites the envy and hatred of others. Literally 'envious': he uses it here to mean 'bound to cause envy', 'giving open offence or open cause of envy': but more because it is open than because it is unfair.

obnoxious, in its more modern sense of 'offensive.'

patent, the charter by which, historically, monopolies were held from the Sovereign; as in the times of Queen Elizabeth. The word 'title' above also seems faintly to hint at this, in the sense of 'legal right'. A monopoly licenses and justifies the holder; it excludes others. Married people flaunt in our faces that part of their 'charter' or title to possession which asserts that they belong to each other only and enjoy something from which others are excluded

PAGE 97. **But this......** Namely, that I don't want her: like the young man above, who doesn't want the lady, but ought, of course, never to say so.

Airs, definitely 'pride', 'conceit.'

More offensive if they were less irrational: we should be more angry at them (airs), if they were not so silly, so unfounded on reason. When you see that this pride is hollow and baseless you are more inclined to laugh at it

Single person, a bachelor.

indifferent, either (*i*) 'trifling', or (*ii*) disconnected from, not affecting, making no difference to (those matters about which they think us ignorant and themselves superior)

blind alley, a lane or street that comes to a stop and does not lead through to another.

PAGE 98. **bargains**, a disrespectful jest: something got nice and cheap, and the buyer all the more pleased with himself because he got it so!

phœnixes. The phœnix; (*huma*) of Arabia was supposed to die in fire and rise again from its own ashes: living 500 years, and being the only one in the world at the time Hence a proverb for rarity.

spices, myrrh and incense, as the Wise Men to Christ at his birth: metaphorical for praise and flattery here.

churching of women: going to church after child-birth to give thanks publicly. The poetic metaphor about the 'arrows' comes from the Bible, (Psalm 127, 5), and occurs in the service for the churching. Office, set form of service.

PAGE 99. **brats**, a mildly abusive word, and toying is also contemptuous. 'Who wants to touch the nasty little wretches ?'

indifferent, having nothing particular about it, colourless or without character of its own: you can then attach any ideas you like to it. In this case I attach to it the idea of

my friend, and as the thing itself makes no difference or does not affect the matter, my idea is undisturbed.

per se, (Latin), by or in themselves : children have a character of their own.

stock : this might be taken in several ways. Here, however, Lamb means what they possess and what they are —their own stock or equipment of qualities.

nice, particular ; too dainty in my taste to like everything.

the delicate creatures...... their mothers : delicate is lightly mocking. Girls were in those days brought up to be and to consider themselves delicate : *e.g*, it was lady-like to faint ; recall here Goldsmith, Essay XIII.

PAGE 100. **the prettier the kind**...... Are children (generally) such pretty things ? Then I will be the more particular to like only the prettiest among them. Do I care which daisy is prettiest ? Not much, all daisies are common and plain : but of violets, which are valued and expected to be pretty, I care only for the daintiest, both in look and smell.

squeamish, nice, particular : metaphor from a delicate stomach, which refuses all but delicate food.

But this is not the worst ..... The train of argument is : bad enough to be blamed for not paying attention to the children of the house ; but even there, you are at least a visitor and a friend of some kind. Lucky if you remain a friend at all, when your friends start families !

With some limitations, they...... They = the wives.

authentic : this belongs to the metaphor about to be opened, of the coin. Fancy old and true coin having to suffer the indignity of being freshly stamped ! Had it been spurious, inferior stuff, it would matter less.

PAGE 10', **in these new mintings**; every time that an old friend of mine takes a wife, she calls in my friendship to be examined, accepted or rejected, and if passed stamped with her approval ! [Putting it somewhat slangily, I have to be 'vetted' anew by each bride before I am passed 'sound' —in other metaphor] You may guess what luck ..... Need I say, I am usually 'spun'—thrown out ?

worm you out : get you out by crooked, slow methods.

defer to, bow to, pay respect to

excrescences, your peculiarities :metaphor from a lump wart or ugly growth on the body.

not quite vulgar, a little more than common (not to say distinguished).

begins to suspect......humorist, comes to think you must be a crank, an 'oddity'.

never-qualified exaggerations : she always says 'splendid', 'how wonderful'; unmodified praise is a way of irony, a hint of mockery. To cry up, to praise : a street hawker 'cries up' his wares—"beautiful balloons, *only* a penny", etc

grows weary of the debt : at first he is mutely thankful to her for praising his friend so frankly, but he simply gets worn out with it.

relaxing......slackening (the friendship) from his side.

taking down a peg or two, the same as relaxing : it makes the metaphor (from violin-strings) more explicit. He then becomes a lukewarm friend ; shows ordinary humanity and politeness to you as he would to anybody. The description is extraordinarily clever.

PAGE 102. **So desirable** ; ironically.

poignancy, sharp wit, cleverness.

irregularities in your moral deportment, faults in your morals.

I had the civility......I thought it, but did not say it.

PAGE 103. **Testacea.** Latin for oyster: and Cerasia, for cherries : witty inventions for the ladies' names, according to the subject.

reversing the point of good manners : reversing, good manners and turning the point (of the sword against the wrong person. Good manners should have been to the disadvantage of the husband, whereas she tuned them against the guest.

ceremony, *i. e.*, good manners, politeness, is the means of putting us at our ease when we feel we are intruders : the effort to prevent us from feeling that we are not really wanted, as our company cannot compare with the husband's.

invidious preference, like an 'invidious distinction,' which would make us feel we are inferior, that someone else has a position from which we are excluded : just as above, an invidious monopoly. She cannot give us, but has to give her husband, that preference in all greater points. The definition of politeness is apt and well expressed.

she would have acted......If the positions had been reversed - I late, and her husband in time, it would have been right to wait for me.

vicarious gluttony, a compressed idea that is a little difficult to grasp. Vicarious (as 'vicarious suffering') is that which is done for us by another (as, if a friend suffers in our place). Hence her action in holding back the cherries for her husband was a 'vicarious gluttony', because though it was not gluttony of her own that was to be satisfied, it was the gluttony of her husband which she would enjoy through him : he would feast on them—she knew how he loved them—and she have the 'vicarious' satisfaction.

Morellas, special kind of cherries from Morella, near Valencia, in Spain.

applying to......applying myself to, beginning to take, with pleasure.

less extraordinary, said in irony for 'frightfully ordinary', 'the commonest and coarsest.'

unwedded palate: the tasting part of my mouth had not yet met the dainty fruit : it was snatched, as it were, from my lips.

PAGE 104. **Roman denominations**, names such as Testacea and Cerasia. 'I could invent more, to hang up my offending married friends for you to mock at.' The merry manner of this ending takes all sting out of his attack.

XVII

OXFORD IN THE VACATION.

PAGE 105. **Connoisseur in prints**. Connoisseur (knower) is a French term, at that time already accepted as English, for an expert. The man who is expert in valuing pictures. Prints are reproductions of old pictures by means of engraving.

quis sculpsit, the signature at the bottom corner which tells 'who engraved it': literally. Who engraved? (Latin). These marks of authorship are customarily recorded in the Latin forms. *e. g.* 'W. Winterus sc.' [sculpsit] or 'W. Winterus del.' [delineavit] for a painting, 'pinx', or 'pinxit' or simply 'p'.

Vivares, Woollet, noted engravers, the first French, the second English, (eighteenth century).

Who is Elia? I think I see the reader (like a careful man) before reading this article, look at the last page to see the name of the writer ; and seeing it signed 'Elia', he exclaims 'Who is he ?' and especially, 'Who is he to write about Oxford ?'

Because in my last ...The last essay was on the South Sea House: it appeared in the London Magazine in August 1920, and this essay in October. 'So you thought Elia was a dry-as-dust scribbler of a clerk, did you?'

Self-same college: perhaps with a joking allusion to the subject, Oxford. 'No University man, only a South Sea College man! a Clerks' Colleger!' But college in its Latin sense also means a guild or brotherhood.

notched and cropt scrivener. Scrivener—scribbler—is almost a term of abuse for a writer. Notched; a bad barber would 'notch' the beard or hair, *i. e.*, cut it into uneven points. 'Badly-trimmed, shaven-headed babu' would come near it. (Possibly there is also a playful comparison between the clerk and his quill pen; 'like his quill, dry, stiff, with unevenly clipped feathers.'

sucks his sustenance: as a very sick person gets liquid food to suck little by little through a quill (or a straw); 'so the pen furnishes me, you imagine, with my scanty living'.

Well, I do agnise...... Agnise is a rare word such as Lamb uses in his most impersonal moods, when acting, as it were, a part, as an ancient sage: 'admit', 'confess'.

Lamb says 'my humour, my fancy' to work a little—'only of course, as a relaxation from literary work, a kind of play —I just fool about with entries in account-books—I do it of my own accord, my whim!' Compare this with Essay XV and it will be clear that Lamb is here at the very top of his fooling—fairly carried away by the madness of jesting.

In the first place... The sentence is left blank on purpose, there is really nothing to say.—To your books... another blank; what he really wants to do is to come to the description of how he wastes his time in office! Lamb took this trick of using blanks from Sterne.

PAGE 106 **parings**, odd bits, rubbish, remains.

settings up. An author is able to 'set up shop' with the leavings of his office papers! there is such a stock of them, they can 'set him up in business' as a literary man.

cart-rucks, cart-ruts: the dreary, weary, rough road

a midnight dissertation, an essay, such as I write at night sitting up late.

So that you see......compromised .... condescension. 'If I do stoop a bit from literature to clerk-work, yet it is not so very disgraceful: the two fit into each other, do you see? ['One is a relaxation from the other, though I am hanged if I can tell you which!'] He has really contradicted himself

about this, and breaks off his sentences, as if he could tell you a lot more and explain himself if he liked.—'Anyway, clerkship and authorship are somehow interwoven'.

Not that...... still joking. 'Office work is fine! not that it has not defects... ' **Commodities**, in an old [Latin] sense, where we should put amenities: pleasant points, advantages. (Nowadays commodities means those things which are easily available to buy and sell, 'commodities of exchange' or trade, and has practically fallen to mean merely goods'.)

Joseph's vest, see the Bible. Genesis 36, 3 It was a "coat of many colours": 'So is life in a public office—I can't tell you all its beauties'.

abolition. Apparently it was about this time that saints' days or the important ones) ceased to be kept as holidays in public offices. A 'consolatory interstice', a comforting gap,' is a mighty phrase for 'a day off' Saints' days, were marked in red figures—hence 'red-letter days': which, he jokingly says, have become 'dead-letter days': *i. e.*, the observance of them has been made a 'dead letter', a writing of no effect: abolished. A law is said to be 'a dead letter' when it is in practice never used, never applied, obsolete.

Names of saints follow. (The quotation is not exactly one: he could not remember a line in Milton, and filled it up anyhow.)

by the same token = 'by the way, that reminds me': it is a token, a sign, a reminder. 'When I mention my school, it reminds me of the prayer-book'

effigies...... This prayer-book contained pictures of the saints in their martyrdom: Peter was crucified head downwards: Bartholomew (Bartlemy) flayed alive. The picture of the latter imitated—probably had been copied from—the picture of a very different person: Marsyas being flayed by Apollo, painted by Spagnoletti, a Spanish artist (17th century). Apollo being the god of the lyre, and Marsyas having dared to challenge him at playing it, Apollo won the contest and flayed the loser out of his skin: a sufficiently horrible subject to paint: but it was also rather a jest to Lamb that the good simple Christians took their St. Bartholomew's martyrdom from the very picture illustrating the heathen legend of the ancient world. It was a fairly common subject with Italian painters.

I honoured......**Iscariot**......**sacred**. I liked holidays so much! so did we all!—I sometimes thought, what a pity Judas Iscariotes, (the betrayer of Christ to death) fell out of the number of the Twelve! if he had not thus defaulted

—and cheated us!—There would have been 12 instead of 11 holidays for the Apostles! ['Defalcation' is almost certainly intended by Lamb for the noun of 'to default', 'to fail us': not as=embezzlement.]

grudged......coalition. One of the holidays bore the entry "St. Simon and St. Jude" (this was another Judas, not Iscariot. 'I grudged the loss of a holiday in this way: it was miserly Christianity to save one day by combining two Saints!"

unworthy of the dispensation. The 'Dispensation' means God's free gift in Christ: hence to live 'under the dispensation' means to have the good fortune to be in the Christian era and not in the darker age of paganism preceding it. Practically therefore he means that it was unworthy of Christianity to be so mean, when God had given the gift freely Dimly the little boy thought:—'God surely never meant little boys to be done out of their holidays by such a dodge'.

Page 107 **the Epiphany** [Greek; 'showing'] a church festival: as it is always 12 days after Christmas, it may be on any day of the week: if it came on Sunday it was hard luck.

Selden, both lawyer and literary man, famous for his 'Table Talk': lived 1584—1654.

Archbishop Usher, a writer on Church matters and the relations of Church and State: of about the same time.

institution is really from a Latin verb meaning to teach: therefore institution=instruction, teaching.

Bodley: Sir Thomas Bodley founded the Bodleian, the famous Oxford University Library, about 1600. It is one of the great libraries of the world.

ad eundem, Latin for 'to the same' (degree), *i.e.*, given the degree honorarily, without examination.

Sizar, a poor student who did work for others: servitor is the corresponding Cambridge word. **Gentleman Commoner**: a 'commoner' is still the word for one who is not a 'scholar' or exhibitioner' *i e*, who has not won some kind of scholarship; a 'gentleman commoner' is an old distinction, some students of wealthy and noble families having formerly had special privileges.

Page 108. **wisely mistaking.** because I am worthy of it; I congratulate them on seeing it.

Christ Church, the great College founded by Wolsey at Oxford: the quadrangle first entered, which leads to the Cathedral within the College, is especially fine and spacious.

seraphic, heavenly, like a Seraph in Heaven: he means a Doctor of Divinity (D. D.)

Christ Church meadows and Magdalen gardens and deer-park are famous sights of Oxford. (Magdalen is always pronounced maud-len)

devoir, French for duty: homage, worship.

ours: both here and above (our vacation) for mine.

over-looked, neglected: who should, poor fellow, have had education there, but did not.

butteries: the store-room in connection with the kitchen at most Oxford Colleges is called the 'buttery': it has nothing to do with butter, but with ale, for it is a corruption of 'butlery', (botelerie. Fr.)

immense caves of kitchens: at various colleges; but he is thinking chiefly of Wolsey's famous kitchen at Christ Church, which all visitors see.

cordial recesses: caves of kitchens which glow with hearty welcome or hospitality—'heart-warming.'

spits which have cooked for Chaucer, refers properly only to the older Colleges, such as Balliol and University College. Chaucer lived about 1340—1400, the first colleges date from about 1290 or 1300.

a Manciple, a steward, like the Manciple of Chaucer's poem, the Canterbury Tales.

Janus: the statue of Janus in ancient Rome had two faces, one looking forward and the other backward: we can only do half of this, namely, look backward, revering the past.

thy, Antiquity's: the 'dark ages of antiquity.'

palpable obscure, another scrap from Milton: a 'darkness that may be felt.'

PAGE 109. **arride**, as quaint an old word as agnise: 'smile to me,' please me.'

souls: his fancy is that the souls are sleeping in the books: rows of souls,—a dormitory of them!

to these Bodleians: to this Bodleian and other such libraries.

dislodge a shade, raise a ghost from its resting-place, the grave. **Shade** in this sense is a literal translation of Latin umbra, shade or shadow.

sciential, a manufactured word: apples of 'scientia': the apples of the tree of Wisdom that grew in the Garden of Eden.

variœ lectiones. Latin for 'varions readings': where there is doubt about the correctness of the copy, and variations have been suggested by scholars.

Herculanean raker: raker in the ashes of Herculaneum, buried in the eruption of Vesuvius in A. D. 79. 'I don't explore ruins for fragments of books.'

The credit of the three witnesses......Porson...... Porson was famous for Greek scholarship: he cast doubt on a verse in the Bible (Epistle of John, I. chap. 5, 7) about the Trinity 'There are three witnesses in Heaven..........') Lamb means that he would have been content to accept the 'credit' —that is, 'genuineness'—of the passage about the three witnesses. Porson's objection was right: everybody now considers the passage to have been put in by someone later. G. D. was Dyer, a scholar friend of Lamb's: see also Essay XXVII.

Oriel, an Oxford College.

I longed ....' I thought I would like him bound in Russia leather and placed in a shelf.' Scapula wrote a dictionary: he was a German 16th cent. Apparently this was a very tall book: 'my friend is not much taller, he would pass for a copy of Scapula's dictionary.'

Clifford's Inn, one of the Inns of Court then, but now no longer in existence. **Like a dove......**A contrast between his innocence and the wickedness of lawyers and law agents.

PAGE 110. **apparitors**, 'appearers': men who served writs or summons: **promoters,** promoters of law-suits. shady fellows who knew enough law to encourage quarrels between parties.

'strike an abstract idea': this sounds familiar and like a quotation (but Benham does not mention it: it also, however, sounds modern, and perhaps Lamb took it from the conversation of his friends, and felt he must use quotation marks.

caputs, a Latin word with the English plural (s) added. Caput means 'head.'

Alma Maters: two are concerned, hence 'gentlewomen' also below. The 'dons' of Oxford have reposed so long on the breast of their 'Alma Mater' that they are content to have her as she is and draw their living from her: similarly at Cambridge. (Many now at the head of Colleges were also undergraduates of the same University, so she is in indeed their 'Alma Mater'.)

They have their good glebe lands: a glebe is the land

attached to a parsonage, or in some cases to a monastic house or a College. The Colleges were in many cases given lands as endowment, and still own these and draw the rents; some in London, some in distant parts of England.

in manu, Latin for in hand. Thus the revenue of their College is sure. They do not bother about the original deed of gift.

D. is not the man to complain. He does not complain about the indifference of those who ought to be interested in this historical research.

started: 'shied' like an animal: jumped away.

A priori, reasoning from the beginning: without accidental circumstances. The sentence means: 'of course it was surprising for him to see me in Oriel.'

PAGE 111. **absent**: absent-minded.

failures, to find the family at home.

Lar, not common in the singular: the plural, Lares (Latin) means 'the household gods': their statues stood in the Roman house. The lady is compared to a guardian deity presiding over the family. 'A. S.' refers to her daughter (A. S. M.)

"**certainly not**........" inverted commas indicating that such were the servant's words when he first called)

Sosia, a character in Plautus Roman comedy-writer, about B. C 70, the play being a kind of 'comedy of errors'. **Sosia** meets himself, because he has a 'double', and also impersonates his master.

I hope he will not heep .. ..'I like his absent-mindedness, I should not think him the same without it': he goes on to explain why.

to be absent...... the words of St. Paul in the Bible, Epistle to the Corinthians, II, chap. 5, 6.

Mount Tabor, connected with Christ by tradition: **Parnassus,** in Greece, the mountain sacred to Apollo and the Muses, used figuratively of the 'heights of poetry': **Plato,** the Greek philosopher ('Aflatun', Arabic).

co-sphered with Plato, with Plato in the spheres, in the skies: as Plato's speculations on the universe included the theory of the physical spheres containing the sun, the moon and the planets.

Harrington, 1611–1677, mentioned after Plato, because like Plato he wrote of an imaginary 'Republic': his work was named 'Oceana.'

PAGE. 112. **to thee thyself.** Dyer being a pious, gentle, learned and generous soul, was perhaps thinking out something kind to do to you when you thus met him—and in his absorption he did not notice you: or did rather late, recognise you, and was embarrassed for the very reason that he had been thinking of you.

Bath, Buxton, Scarborough, Harrowgate: watering-places, fashionable resorts where crowds of well-dressed people flock every year. Of these only Scarborough is a sea-side place: the rest inland, but famous for curative waters.

Cam, the Cambridge river, and Isis, the local name for the Thames at Oxford. 'The waters of Damascus': quoted (but amiss from the Bible, Kings II, 5, 12: 'Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus: are they not better than all the waters of Israel?' in the story of Naaman the Syrian.

Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains: see Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress.

The Interpreter at the House Beautiful, from the same.

LEIGH HUNT

James Henry Leigh Hunt, 1784—1859: educated at Christ's Hospital, where Lamb and S T. Coleridge also were educated: edited The Examiner, and later The Indicator; an essayist chiefly, though some of his verse is still read His essays influenced Lamb and Hazlitt. These, and also Shelley, Keats and Byron, were among his friends, and later also Dickens, Carlyle, and Browning. From his youth a great play-goer, he also wrote a very successful play; but most of his work was journalistic.

XVIII

ON GETTING UP ON COLD MORNINGS

[From The Indicator.]

PAGE 113. **Jesuit,** member of the Society of Jesus a society for the intensive promotion of Roman Catholicism by all means, founded by Ignatius Loyola in the 15th century.

He argued that these creatures were not found in the Garden of Eden, but created by God afterwards to add to man's trials.

of the North: where insects are not nearly so troublesome.

the snow on the house-tops. Perhaps the author saw it as he glanced out of his window during the writing of this: in any case it humorously chimes in with the matter of the essay.

not idling: our brain is hard at work, arguing both sides of this problem.

PAGE 114. **lie**: there is just the shadow of an allusion to lying in the sense of falsehood; to lie to a person's face is the most shameless piece of effrontery. So also there may be the same light passing fancy where lying is used above, after idling: idleness and falsehood being sins.

the inside and the out: they represent the 'Out' side, I represent the 'In': these are the 'sides' of the question.

pulled aside, like a rein in a driver's hand: the stage-coachman, or driver, being the man, who controls his will and actions.

decumbency, a humorous Latinism for 'down-lying': one's position as a 'down-lier,' the way in which one has carried out the duties of the post of 'decumbent.'

besides: the connection is (though clumsily arranged):—'besides these things...they must also consider......the following.' They must consider not only the differences between man and man in natural ability to get up (and the special allowance to be made for me, who am one of the weak) and the amount of brain and other work put upon him by his position, but also the following....

injured: because he has been abused as a lazy lout, and they have even asked how he can be a reasonable being.

inharmonious, not according well (with a warm-blooded animal): uncritical, ill-judged, an action undertaken without sense and udgment.

refining upon, dwelling upon, painting with particularly fine detail, describing minutely; but also with the idea of 'introducing fresh improvements' upon what they have been told, from their own ingenuity. Thus Dante invented more and more curious tortures than Virgil; Milton improves even upon Dante.

harpy footed furies. The Harpies were female friends with birds' beaks and claws; 'the Furies, properly the avenging deities of the Greeks (also female and winged), is used loosely for fiends or demons, specially told off to punish sinful souls in hell, with red-hot pincers, and other instruments.

symptom, sign (of the coldness of the weather): the eye can see it.

PAGE 115. **lies on thorns for**: awaits most anxiously. **fine**, delightful, in bed.

overnice; too exact: criticising the servant who appeared by his last answer such a good fellow. Why is he so particular this time to tell the exact truth? eh might have said 'it is fairly hot, Sir.' Too virtuous, too literal.

officious, anxious and zealous to perform a duty when it is not necessary or required).

incumbent. Differs from decumbent only as it means a lier in, instead of a lier-down. "The incumbent of a bed': but 'incumbent of a post," 'incumbent of a parish,' is the regular term for the occupant, the holder, the clergyman in charge Hunt here very whimsically inverts things: and instead of saying 'what a lovely word to use for me—the incumbent of a bed!' he says 'what a lovely word for a clergyman in the country—where he really can lie and be lazy!'

I now cannot help thinking......More brain-work, and unavoidable!

step, movement of the body, but compared to making an excursion to see the country.

the Queen of France: Queen Eleanor, who got a divorce from Louis VII: and afterwards married Henry II of England. Louis did not wear a beard.

Julian, a Roman Emperor (late). He goes on to mention well known pictures, showing all the subjects bearded.

PAGE 116. **otiose**, 'easy,' easeful,' taking the Latin word literally, though this is not the actual usage of the word in English.

Bed-ridden Hassan is a joke, a pun on Badar-ud-din Hassan of the Arabian Nights. 'Bed-ridden' means confined to bed, unable to rise.

Wortley Montagu, (Edward), a late sleeper': son of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, (1689—1762 a famous literary woman. He lived 1714—1776.

above the prejudice of his time, because he held the true belief about bed against them.

amplitude: this word is unmeaning, in any usual sense, as it either means size, largeness or glory or has a technical meaning in science. Surely the writer meant some other word, or mixed the meanings of two or three words: he seems to mean 'surrounding air,' or 'surrounding and embracing air' the warmed air inside the blankets: something like 'ambience,' mixed with 'amplexus' (Latin, 'embrace').

"Sweetly recommends itself......" The quotation is from Macbeth where Duncan arriving at Macbeth's castle says, the air is sweet and soft, and the place pleasant. 'Our gentle senses,' our softer feelings: very suitable to the lazer in bed!

to oppose, to object to. **He has no merit in opposing it:** a little difficult to follow. If he could get any praise for opposing it, objecting to it, he would: that indicates that either his nature or something else has made it easy enough for him to get up—so he need not talk to me.

Thomson: James Thomson, Scottish poet (1700—1748), author of the Seasons, The Castle of Indolence, etc. He was a very late riser, yet enjoyed out-door life, but perhaps, as Leigh Hunt hints, enjoyed it in summer only.

We must proportion the argument...... The question of what is a sufficient motive for getting up depends on the person; the same motive will not be valid for everybody.

three and fourpence would mean three shillings and four pence; if this was a fixed fee in some profession (as it is 1/6 of a pound sterling) there may be sense in it. But other editions read here 'three or four pence,' which is preferable —the very smallness of the bait for the miser is comic. Or, reading and without much difference of sense, three and four pence, we may take him to mean this: one miser (first class, will be drawn out of bed by 3, another (second-class) will require 4, and so on! (I should in any case separate four from pence).

A proud man...... The argument from self-respect But, says Hunt, why this terrible respect for yourself? drop it! stay in bed and respect bed more than self: it does you very well!

PAGE 117. **shall**, an old way of using shall, meaning 'you will find that he gets up.' But so also, you will find, does the barometer. Why be like a machine or an inanimate force? We are men.

ingenious lier...... Again the ghost of a pun on false lying. 'An ingenious liar,' 'a clever liar,' are common phrases.

hard matter...... He will be able to make a strong defence and put up a stout controversy (or make quite a difficult problem out of it) even on the question, 'Does late lying affect health?'

sophisticate, use specious arguments, sophistries, theories that sound wonderfully well.

Holborn : a famous London street : also a fairly long one (part of it has since been re-named—it was longer then) : so the argument runs, 'Is the longest street in London therefore the best street ?'

XIX

THE OLD GENTLEMAN.

[From The Indicator.]

PAGE 118. **to be exclusively himself** : to be the person we mean, so that all we say may apply to him.

invidious : now often used in this way : it means, in effect "why should we select this particular person to the exclusion of others ?" but the sting would of course be to the one, not to the others. The word here is difficult to render . 'It would be rude, unnecessary, unkind ; going out of our way to hurt his feelings, as though we had a special grudge against him.' If we mentioned the age, someone would take it as an insult, as somebody must be of that age.

Wanting in universality : a formidable phrase, only meaning 'it would not cover all the possible cases' because there is a third possibility—he may be bald altogether : or a fourth—he may have some hair but also wear some false hair).

Scratch. a very meagre wig such as is now worn [1940, say]. **toupee**, a French word for a particular kind of full wig.

Sensorium, vaguely used on purpose : whatever part of the brain it is that contains the sense of what is on the skin of one's head). 'So that he may not feel, exactly how bald he is.'

to show his hardiness as well as taste : it will show (*i*) the niceness of his taste in linen ; and (*ii*) that he is not afraid of cold.

PAGE 119. **when made-a-bow-to**, an example of the excess to which this idiom in English can be driven. 'Bowed-to'—when some one bows to him. 'Made-a-bow-to' —when some one makes a bow to him. The person is, of course, a lady.

"When beauteous Mira walks the plain." The quotation and the whole sentence are made up as a type or specimen of the old gentleman's equipment : the line of

poetry is typical because it is in a style that was fashionable in the days of Swift and Pope. [I have not been able to find for certain whether the line is the opening of the poem 'To Myra' by Grenvile, Lord Lansdowne, 1667-1735.]

He intends this...... The idea is that he meant to put the paper in the book but forgot, so it is still loose in his pocket. A 'commonplace-book' is a note-book kept for jotting down stories, jokes, stray ideas—whatever one happens to find striking in the course of the day.

Lady Mary Wortley Montague, referred to above—Essay XVIII, Notes. The Rev. Charles Churchill (1731-1764) was a poet of the same school as Pope: one quotation, which perhaps helped the 'old gentleman,' will illustrate the style as well :—

> The surest road to health, say what they will,
> Is, never to suppose we shall be ill.
> Most of those evils we poor mortals know,
> From doctors and imagination flow.

The remainder of the books mentioned are typical old-fashioned favourites, or old standard works. Blair is probably the poet Robert Blair (1699-1746) whose famous Ode begins :—

> How sleep the brave, who sink to rest
> By all their country's whishes blest ?

'Junius,' a pen-name only : the famous "Letters of Junius" have never been assigned with certainty to the real author. They were published in the years 1769-1772- and deal freely with politics ; it has been generally sup, posed that they were written by Sir Philip Francis.

Lord George Gordon, the nobleman who helped to cause the famous riots in 1780 : the American War (1776-1783) was then being waged ; and 1789 saw the beginning of the French Revolution. All these are chosen to show that about 1770 we may suppose the Old Gentleman to have been a student, and about 1780-90 in his early maturity.

William Hogarth, (1679-1764), a famous artist known by his cartoons and caricatures, especially by 'the Rake's Progress,' a series of powerful pictures. Sir Joshua Reynolds, perhaps the most famous of all English painters of portraits. Next we come to the portraits of a soldier and a sailor. John Manmus, Marquis of Granby, 1721-1770 fought at Minden and other battles on the continent, became Commander-in-Chief, and is still commemorated in inn signs in many places in England. Lord Howe was the

admiral who won the famous fight of the 1st of June 1794 against the French.

A humorous piece after Penny, a picture either a copy or an immitation of one by Penny

PAGE 120 **having been satisfied by......** Two things were enough for him: (i) the authority of Johnson (ii) the fact that he liked it himself. (Both together amount to just nothing as an argument! (Samuel Johnson was notorious for excessive tea-drinking—14 cups at a sitting were not too much for him)

cheapening: you go into the shop and ask the price, and try to beat it down, but not meeting the success you wish go out again.

new old print; it is old prints he is after: new probably means simply another, a fresh one, one that he has newly seen in the window. He keeps a portfolio of prints, as he keeps a note book of verses, etc.

cheapen a fish or so: in this case he has no intention of buying, but wishes to exchange a word or two with the polite fish monger, so he growls, "One and sixpence, did you say? I'd give you one and threepence for it!" and strolls on.

takes cheese with it: cheese is of course a digestive, though itself a task to digest. His fads and prejudices are unshakeable.

sing a song: the examples are of very old-fashioned ditties of the 18th century kind. Mr. is added to the names because he always speaks of them so, having read this on the covers of the music; authors and composers used to have the Mr. religiously attached in print on title-pages.

PAGE 121. **canvas the theory of that matter,** discuss it: probably the merits of the old style of music as compared with the new

Lords North and Rockingham, statesmen and each at times Prime Minister, between 1765 and 1785.

my lord, pronounced almost as one syllable: m'lord, as one finds it represented by some authors and play wrights.

scientific. that is, as regards cards: acquainted with the science of whist and willing to enter upon it in a scientific spirit.

PAGE 122. **younger men of letters.....good losers**. There is a good deal of meaning in this. Of younger men's society he has no love, but literary men are an exception [no doubt Leigh Hunt himself came in here, and we get the occasion of some of his personal observation]. One

reason is that he has a respect for literature (see above, his books, verses, etc.); another is that they are quieter people than the average; and the last is that they lose and pay, which he can't help liking! Good loser is generally applied to a man who does not take defeat ill, especially at cards; but there is no doubt that the combination of the words here comes from different ideas. 'If no good to play with, they have at least one good point—that they lose lots of cash!

prove victory by getting the baggage: our general and the enemy's general both claim a victory, but ours has got the other's baggage, and that is conclusive proof. Or, when a victory is manifest, the general will not by any means despise the capture of personal baggage of the enemy, like Napoleon's carriage after Waterloo; it is a kind of emphasis of the victory.

Garrick, etc., actors of his boyhood.

that the little boy should see. Of course there is always a little boy somewhere near in the audience (hence the—as a matter of course: and the kind-hearted Old Gentleman remembers how keen he was himself as a child. 'The hint to us is 'Wherever you go to see a play, there is always this type of old fellow sitting well in front—and you always see him once at least in a night befriending some small boy who doesn't get a good view',

Vauxhall: famous gardens in those days and a fashionable place of entertainment, which disappeared long ago. Even then its popularity had nearly gone; Vauxhall is now quite an unpleasant and almost central region of London. Ranelagh is much further out, and has renewed its popularity—partly owing to polo nowadays

flaring, tawdry, brightened up with cheap ornament, *e. g.*, gas lights at night.

swimming by you, referring to the gait of the ladies: the 'swimming gait' is long out of fashion. Compare Shakespeare, Midsummer Night's Dream.

'she with stately and with swimming gait'

Page 123. **saluting**, by a kiss on the brow or cheek. **on the least holiday occasion**, whenever there is the smallest excuse or ground for considering it a special day, *e. g.*, a birthday or any day of congratulation.

bitting her lips at the joke biting her lip to keep from smiling at the quaintness of the old Gentleman holding a kind of kissing parade.

He never recollects......No matter what weather it is: you always hear him make this remark—"I never recollect such weather—no, sir—unless perhaps in '89......" and then follows a story.

the former: the one likest himself (the other—likest his wife—makes him tender, sentimental, and grave.)

who was the father......His stock joke for little boys: **Zebedee**, in the Bible, Matthew, 10, 2, etc.

William Hazlitt.

William Hazlitt, 1778-1830: educated chiefly at home: intended to become an artist, but became a writer instead. Wrote well on art and the drama: was a great reader of every sort of literature. A friend of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, and other famous writers: contributed to the famous 'Edinburgh Review,' to Leigh Hunt's 'Examiner,' and the 'London Magazine': was a great critic and expounder of the dramas of Shakespeare: and lectured on English literature,

XX

On Going a Journey.

(This essay is larded with quotations great and small, but Hazlitt did not do it for effect: he was so familiar with the whole range of English literature that he assumed perfect sympathy and equal knowledge in his readers.)

Page 124. **vegetate like the country**, merely grow, and let the mind sleep: the country shows us Nature doing this in her animals and plants. I am not for criticising...... the other, the practical aspect of the country,—what a farmer would see in it,—is not for me.

carry the metropolis......**encumbrances**. Brighton or Harrogate becomes like a second London with the fashionable crowd: and one needs as many clothes.

" **a friend,** " etc. Cowper, Retirement, 739: he mentions that it comes from a French author. 'Solitude? Yes, delightful: but give me one companion to whom I may express the thought that it is delightful.'

Page 125. **tilbury**, from the town of that name: a smart gig for two.

let me have a truce with impertinence. To have a truce

with a thing is a common metaphor, the idea being that I promise to leave it alone if it will leave me alone. Often used exclamatorily : 'A truce to fooling!' *i. e.*, none of it, no more of it for the present. Impertinence here means whatever is foreign to the present purpose and therefore disturbing. In the country I want the country : not what does not pertain to it.

and then to thinking ! *i. e.*, once I am giving these conditions, I fall gladly to thinking. (Not following the dinner, as one might hastily infer from the arrangement of the words)

start some game: we must avoid the unfortunately obvious meaning, as it would be nowadays : not play! but what is equally ordinary English idiom, put up a bird or a hare : only it is not literal but metaphorical. 'Surely there some thoughts will be roused which I can hunt down.' These lone heaths, undisturbed by company, will surely loose my thoughts, fire trains of ideas which I can enjoy working out.

From the point...... Like a diver taking off from a rocky promontory, I dive into the past : the vision of the cloud brings visions of the past, revises old associations, probably of boyhood. The Indian seems to refer either to Madrasis or South Sea Islanders diving through the surf shorewards from a boat.

"sunken wrack," etc. [Most editions have wreck : Hazlitt would read wrack.] Shakespear, Henry V., act i., Sc. 2. At the bottom of the sea : he is still using the 'diving' metaphor : the sea is the past.

an awkward silence...... as would be the case if I had a companion. (For the whole question of company versus solitude compare Essay XXIV.)

analysis, of problems, or of common (one's own) ideas, in discussion with another person.

very stuff o' the conscience : Shakespeare, Othello, act i. Sc. 2. 'A thing I hold myself sacredly bound to.' (Othello said, to refrain from any plot to murder a man, as opposed to killing in war).

the circumstance : some old association with the daisy in memory : some trifle of my childhood which could not interest you.

PAGE 126. **that you may**...... *i. e*, that you should have a companion, and go apart from him if you feel you want to think.

"out upon," etc. Shakespeare, King Henry IV, act i., Sc. 2.

synthetical...... analytical : allow the impressions I receive to build themselves, unconsciously, into ideas, and let the ideas come : not ask myself, as if it were a discussion, in what the charm of each object consists. Synthesis, putting together : analysis, breaking up : the two methods of reasoning or of treating ideas.

PAGE 127. **or in such company as I do not covet** : meaning the company of someone not at all intelletcual, someone, whose intellect I could look down upon ; and I do not care to have such company for a journey.

measured road, *i. e.*, when going for a walk along made roads, not across hills or across country : walking on such a road, is in any case rather a drudgery, and a friend to argue with is all very well then. In really pleasant walks I want to be alone.

"give it an understanding, but no tongue" : Shakespeare, Hamlet, act i., Sc. 2.

PAGE 128. **"that fine madness," etc.** See in Michael Drayton (1562-1631). Poets and Poesy.

For that fine madness he did still retain,
Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.

They, his words (Coleridge's).

PAGE 129. **a good thing** : a good saying, a passage of wit or something of special interest to literary men, to be repeated in their circle.

"to take one's ease at one's inn" is a very old saying. Compare Shakespeare. Henry IV, Part I, act iii., Sc. 3 ; but it also occurs in John Heywood's proverbs, as a proverb ; 'let the world wag and take mine ease in mine inn.'

"The cups," etc In Cowper's task : The Winter Evening, 39 ; but the last four words he owed to Bishop Berkeley, Siris, 217.

a rasher, a fried slice of bacon.

sancho, Sancho Panza, the servant of Don Quixote.

shandean, like that of Tristram Shandy : Tristram Shandy, by Laurence Sterne (1713-1768).

PAGE 130. **Procul O, procul este Profani!** (ye vulgar, avaunt, avaunt !) Vergil, Aeneid, Book VI., 258.

A Quaker : the Quakers are silent people, and they are also very much aloof and apart from the majority of men,

nor likely to intrude upon me. From the West Riding of Yorkshire: Hazlitt is probably humorously referring to their dialect; 'I should not understand him, nor he me.'

He breaks no squares: of my army of thoughts. I keep my front intact. 'I do not invade or attack him, nor he me: we remain apart.'

sigh my soul into...... As if, by mere longing and force of imagination, I could feel what it is like to live thus, wandering free from place to place.

rips up old grievances, re-opens the old wounds of some small disagreements or temporary annoyances: these may have occurred between him and me, or between us both and someone else.

He comes in...... Speaking of the case where we have already met a stranger, and are enjoying the feeling that he knows nothing about us and that he will have to judge us from his present impression; we can put on any air we like, act any character, and he cannot but accept it. But a friend who then comes in as a third party is sure to upset all this, even unintentionally.

it seems that other people do. Even if the friend does not drop a single hint, you feel as if everyone knew all about you, just because he does.

a citizen of the world, not exactly as we have seen it used by Goldsmith and by writers generally. Hazlitt means 'unattached to any locality' rather than 'free of prejudice in regard to country.' He is still thinking of the gypsy life, at home anywhere, whether within England or abroad.

"unhoused free condition," etc. Shakespeare. Othelo, ii, 26.

"circumspection" the real reading is circumscription, being circumscribed, confined, limited.

incognito, originally an adverb, as 'to travel incognito,' to travel in a manner that prevents your identity being known: abbreviated also into 'incog.' Use as a noun follows from its being a very familiar expression. 'The incognito of an inn' is a handy rendering of 'the fact that at inn we can remain incognito, unrecognised.'

'lord of one's self, uncumbered with a name': this is only partly a quotation.

PAGE 131. **to hold to the universe......**To have severed all ties with the world except the ever-present tie of bodily eneds (but even this exception is a pleasure because you

are hungry). To owe nothing, *i. e.*, you have no duties to do, no appointments to keep, no one is expecting anything of you, and your one obligation in life seems to be the bill which you are incurring as you eat—the price of your present enjoyment.

'the gentleman in the parlour' : as you hear the landlady say to the maid. To them you are merely a figure : dozens have been before you.

pretensions, from meaning 'claim,' 'what one may rightfully claim,' here stands for 'position.' They don't know what you are : and you get infected with the feeling that you may be anybody else than you are.

negatively, merely by their not knowing that you are not.

We baffle prejudice. Not very easy to grasp. Suppose some churlishly inclined fellow takes a dislike to us because he thinks we are, say, a rich man : or say, a clergyman : or, say, a schoolmaster or learned person : whatever his prejudice may be, he will soon show what he thinks us to be. We can easily drop some remark which will let him know he is wrong, but still keep him puzzled. 'People who at sight are determined to dislike us can be defeated and made fools of.' Similarly we dissappoint conjecture,—'those who guess (silently or openly) what we are, can be prevented from finding out for certain.'

quits scores with society. A humorous reference to the social philosophers and their works ; they have proved that society is responsible for so many limitations, so many conventions : hence the cry of Rousseau and others after him, 'back to Nature!' Anything then that brings us back to what is natural and unconventional, may be said to 'quit scores' with society, *i. e.*, recover what has been lost, defeat society in return.

I have certainly spent..... Now we have a complete change. The writer, observe, has been romancing : has been carried away by his imagination. It is romance—the exciting idea of something foreign to one's own life something new—that has made him write like this for the page preceding. Hazlitt would probably have been the last person in actuality to act a part and pass himself off in any other character at an inn. This is clear when he comes to say what he has actually done in inns.

Gribelins engravings of the Cartoons : the famous 'cartoons' of Raphael, the Italian painter, in the Vatican (the Pope's Palace) in Rome.

with a peculiar interest in this way, *i.e.*, 'and something peculiarly interesting in the way of books, too.'

Paul and Virginia. The English version of the 18th century French novel by Bernardin de St. Pirre, Paul et Virginie.

Madame d' Arblay (Fanny Burney) a clever woman and acthoress (1752—1840).

PAGE 132. **bon bouche** : **bonne bouche** is French for a tit-bit, a dainty morsel. Birthday : it was his twentieth.

these four words : the soaring hopes of youth and the uplifting of his spirit in the beautiful scenery shaped themselves into these ideals : 'now,' he says, 'grown faint in the light of actual life : or, though I know what I felt at that age, I cannot recall how I felt it.'

PAGE 133. **incorrigible**, literally meant : 'it cannot be corrected or put right. In youth I eagerly longed to reform it.'

PAGE 134. **Sir Fopling Flutter, in The Man of Mode** (1676), by Sir George Etherege (1635—1694). On the farther, the western side of Hyde Park, there was little then but a straggling suburb and then the green country ; it was because it was the country that the man of fashion regarded it as a dreadful desert.

PAGE 135. **To return to the question......** Certainly it has been a long digression, this paragraph on the mental processes : excused by the beginning of it, when he says travelling brings home these facts to us.

the contrary, for the former reason reversed. Far from finding it objectionable, I enjoy it : because just as I hate company when I have incommunicable thoughts to brood on, so I like it when I have communicable ones. (This is the reverse of the medal, the other side of the same coin : or, 'conversely.')

Salisbury Plain does not produce matter for discussion : if I enjoyed it, it would be for the air, the atmosphere, the space, and the incommunicable thoughts to which it might give rise. It is empty of all save God and myself. But Stonehenge [which is on a part of Salisbury Plain], because it is an interesting circle of prehistoric stones, is full of the suggestion of human interests.

In setting out...... This is very obviously sound. For a company or party there must be a definite object or destination : only a person going alone could be content to walk to no destination, because it is not the destination that makes him enjoy it but what he sees and what the scenes suggest.

"The mind is its own place" : and in itself.
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven

Milton, Paradise Lost, Book, I. 253.

Nor are we anxious—*i.e.*, when alone.

do the honours, usually meaning 'of hospitality, of one's own house,' to guests: here of doing service to a party as if they were his guests and he were showing them his estates or possessions. He means that he does enjoy such trips in company, and therefore can enter into things and acquit himself well and thoroughly.

eclat, French for 'brilliance.'

descanted, see Essay xv, Note, p. 276.

Bodleian, see Essay xvii, Note, p. 286.

Blenheim Palace, at Woodstock, 7 miles north of Oxford, the seat of the Dukes of Marlborough.

superseded the powdered cicerone...... 'I quite took the place of the very respectable official guide' (appointed to show visitors the rooms). Hazlitt gave him no chance: he acted as guide to everything himself: the old man's parrot-recitation fell on deaf ears, and nobody noticed what he tried to show them in the pictures. (Of course the guide's intelligence was not equal to grasping what was really good in the pictures—he would point out something ordinary, thinking that to be the merit.)

PAGE 136. **this relief......becomes......appetite**: at first you merely desire or wish to have such a relief; but the desire grows and then you must have it, you die for it, you are greedy for it.

for the image of man...... France was a Republic when in his youth Hazlitt visited it: the monarchy under Napoleon II had not then overthrown the Republic, as it did after Waterloo when the Allies recalled the Bourbons, 1816. Hazlitt detested the Bourbon rule as an 'arbitrary throne.'

I was at no loss for language...... He was an art student, and went to the Continent to study art, therefore he was dealing with matters where no separation of language exists.

like a dream...... In this observation, too, there is much truth; few men, unless they have made themselves of more than one country, can escape the sense that the broken periods lived abroad are pieces of another life.

piece into: as in puzzles where we have to fit different-shaped pieces together.

an animated...... A lively but a brief dream or illusion.

PAGE 137. **actual . ideal.** The actual, the home life: the ideal, that which we live in idea, in mental vision, of our foreign sojourn.

transports, the delight and romance of our first journeying thither.

Our romantic...... That other self, the self of travel, cannot be captured and brought to live with our home-staying, every-day, practical self.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850—1894: educated at Edinburgh: a Scot who has become one of the acknowledged masters of modern English style. Famous for his essays and perhaps still more as a novelist An admirer of French stylists such as Balzac, he stood somewhat apart from the literary and learned cliques of his time; and a lover of Nature, he drew inspiration from her even more than from men. Spent his last years in Samoa in the Pacific Ocean. 'Treasure Island' and 'Kidnapped' are among his best krown novels: 'Travels with a Donkey' and 'Virginibus Puerisque,' among his books of essays. Not the least pleasing of Stevenson's many works are his verses for children.

XXI

THE LANTERN-BEARERS.

(From Hazlitt to Stevenson is a sudden transition: for we now come to the consciously artistic, and indeed to the modern, type of essay)

PAGE 138. **easterly**: the scene is North Berwick, in the east of Scotland.

manse, as in England the 'parsonage,' the residence of the parish 'minister,' the clergyman. Kirk, Scotch for church

London Journal......novels. Nothing good, only the sort of papers and books specially printed to attract small boys: with flaring illustrations and tempting titles ('Bill the Brigand,' and so on).

spit, a low point of land running out (generally sandy).

subsidiary, humorously said of the parents. 'The boys and the parents belonging to them' (as etceteras which they must have).

not yet enough : emphasis on yet. The scene became 'cocknified' overrun with townsman in later days.

links, meadows, or grass-covered stretches of sandy soil especially for golf.

popping, up and down. The turf was full of rabbit-holes in places.

PAGE 139......**dens**, delts.

doubtful bather, leaning over towards the water in doubt whether to take the plunge. The Bass Rock (some miles away) is a small but high island, covered with sea-birds' nests

wrecker. Wreckers frequented the shore in old times: these men lit deceitful lights to confuse mariners, aiming to get their ships wrecked and plunder them.

Bell-the-Cat : who solved the historic difficulty of the Scottish nobles, 'But who will bell the Cat?' *i. e.*, the King of Scotland, James III. This was Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus (1450—1514): Tantallon Castle, the 'fortress' referred to above, was a stronghold of the Douglases The fable of the mice and the cat is of course very much more ancient.

the embarrassment of pleasure, *i.e.*, too much: from the French phrase embarras de richesse, more wealth than one can use.

cold homes of anchorites : they were said to be the ruins of a monastery.

a single......bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Five or six boys after smoking one of these cheap cigars would be laid out upon the grass violently sick! poor apprentices to the smoking business!

padleys, a local name for some small kind of fish.

Indeed, had that been all : if there had been no further trouble than the twisting of lines and fighting about them. The unfortunate further drawback was having to eat the fish, which was not worth while.

PAGE 140. **the Law:=hill.** North Berwick Law is a prominent isolated hill about 900 feet high rising from a flat sea-coast. A whale's jawbone evidently adorned the cairn (heap of stones on top.

guardian stone: you had to put a large stone on your shirt to keep it from being blown away.

the ebb of springs. The spring-tides are when the sun and the moon pull opposite ways and cause the greatest flow and ebb of the tides. In the ebb, therefore, sands and rocks were revealed which for most of the year were concealed. One group to another, of rocks; among the sand and pebbles.

digging a house..... In the bank, generally of firm sandy soil, which bounded the loose sand of the beach and marked the beginning of the grassy links. Sea-ware, sticks

and rubbish left dry by the sea. **I sometimes suppose.........iodine** : 'the so-called apples could hardly have been apples, as when we roasted them nothing seemed to be left' : the writer playfully suggests that they were of the nature of the 'fruit' found on sea-weed—iodine being found in seaweed chiefly.

geans [g pronounced hard] : wild cherries.

PAGE 141. **the Quadrant** : a street or road (with villas on either side probably) curved in the form of a quarter-circle, is commonly called 'Quadrant' instead of 'Road' or 'Street.'

hag-ride. Hag-ridden means infested by witches. 'Her image, like a witch, haunted my thoughts'.

marrowy, rich, juicy, tasty.

coil, noise, strife.

PAGE 142. **reefed**, taken in a bit to decrease the area of sail : lugsail see lugger below.

a tragic maenad, so differing from the real Maenad, who was mad with the joy of Bacchus. Maenads—'mad-women'—were the femal devotees of the god of wine ; a legend treated by Euripides and other Greek dramatists. (The poor girl was behaving like a mad-woman in her awful grief—her husband just drowned before her eyes.)

knuckle-bones, dice : two world-changing events could not affect the popularity of the game of dice.

We now come to what 'I have been all this while withholding.' (This is almost artless art.—The first part of the art of this essay is not keeping back this episode until he has created the atmosphere and surroundings. It is the climax of Part I. The second part of the art is in creating Part II, and turning the 'lantern-bearers' into a wonderful allegory of life.)

worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain : he humorously says, you could see the impression we made on British trade : each summer, tin bull's-eye after tin bull's-eye travelled from Birmingham through Edinburgh to North Berwick, on a well-marked track, to our particular grocer's shop. A 'bull's-eye' is a lantern with glass window of that appearance—a round, thick boss—over which a slide is drawn : you press back the slide and flash the light out.

PAGE 143. **substantive,** in the thing itself : not in its associations.

shibboleth, pass-word : see the Bible story of how those who could only say 'sibboleth' were massacred.

ten-man lugger, a boat for ten men. A lugger is a boat all open except at a cabin made by covering in the stern with a curved roof : with the mast very near the bow and one large sail, called a lugsail (to lug=to pull, may be the derivation . As rowing often had to be resorted to, it had thwarts across the open part.

scaly bilges, the bottom planks on either side of the keel, all scaly from constantly carrying fish. All the boats were fishing-boats, engaged in the herring fishing.

(Part II turns the whimsical description of boy's games into a serious study of traits of character, then into comments on humanity and on literature.)

PAGE 144. **unplumbed childishness**, unfathomable simplicity, in his ability to enjoy his one secret possession like a child. Everybody has this beloved secret pleasure ; it is the light inside the bull's-eye lantern, under the buttoned overcoat, in the dark night.

'Old Bailey Reports' : records of cases at the Old Bailey Court, in London.

by the impish schoolboy : for the plural, by many boys, not one.

PAGE 145. **consideration**, good reputation, the respect of others,

'My mind to me a kingdom is': believed to be by Sir E. Dyre (1540—1607).

a thimble rigger, one who does conjuring tricks with three thimbles and gets your money by tempting you to bet on them (which thimble covers a ball and which does not).

cabinet portrait, meant here for a small sketch : the cabinet size was the convenient size to set on a cabinet, and Stevenson only means to say 'not a great piece of character drawing—a moderate one : I do not call the subject great.' (Hawthorne, as compared with character-drawers like Thackeray or Dickens, was an author to handle a sketch more in brief, less elaborate.) Hawthorne was an American novelist (1804—1864.)

a god with a muck-rake. In Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' a miserly man is pictured as raking dirt and straws on a floor.

PAGE 146. **not one virtue to rub against another** : 'not one penny to rub against another' is the proverbial saying for proverty—They may not have active virtues, practical ones, but they may have contemplative, inward ones.

It is not only in the woods...... This did not only happen, as in the story, once, but happens in daily life still. 'You and I hear the bird of our desire sing, and life passes in the pursuit.'

fills us with such wonder when.....the realist. We cannot understand how the 'realist' school—who pride themselves on showing life as it is—paint everything so sordid. See his reference to Tolstoi below.

PAGE 147. **volumes .....whose consistent falsity......** He goes on to prove that these muddy realists give a false picture of life Chesterton has a similar criticism.

removed, if correctly read here, must mean re-moved, moved again and again : suggesting, like revolve, the wearisome iteration of the same paltry experiences.

if it were spent waiting at a railway junction. Compare Chesterton in Essay XXX : "Many of the most purple hours of my life have been passed at Clapham Junction."

PAGE 148. I **accept the issue** : I agree to debate on these lines, to take up their challenge and confute them.

Whitman : Walt Whitman, American poet, 19th century. His 'Leaves of Grass' appeared in 1855. Seeing beauty in common things and nobleness in the 'average person,' (to whom, he often repeats, he is always speaking) he raised the word 'average' and the phrase 'the average man' almost to sacredness. Birmingham : in jest the writer connects the word 'sacredness' with the rather 'cheap' word Birmingham, which suggests something manufactured in enormous quantities and all the same, like nails, pen-nibs or pins. 'Sacredness' can hardly apply when everybody has got it and it is as common as 'the average man' is.

to prove I have not realised it : these writers have not realised the things they describe with so-called 'realism.'

my error would have lain. These writers would be all very well if they did not proclaim and boast themselves realists : their error is in saying 'Here is this dirty, drab life, and that is all there is in it.'

PAGE 149. **The ungrudging hand of love** : of a writer who loves indecency. Compare Chesterton's criticism of Zola, when Stevenson is attacking. 'He made lust loathsome because to him lust meant life.' ('The Zola Controversy' in 'All Things Considered'). Zola, French novelist, (1840—1902).

To the ear of the stenographer : *i.e.*, to one who is occupied in taking down actual words with absolute and

faithful correctness. The realist is like the stenographer: his rendering is correst but lifeless.

(Part III brings the criticism of realism, or realisticism, to a point: and Part IV contrasts shortly with its poverty the riches of the opposite school, which seeks to bring out the nobility and glory in life.

PAGE 150. **the poet**: Wordsworth: cased in stone, lives in a stone house; the writer means to recall that the fan cies of the miser or the misunderstood person generally are wholly hidden by the stony exterior. The lines are from 'The Prelude.'

the observer...with all his documents, is abroad: though, like the stenographer, he can offer proof in detail, he is 'at sea,' he has missed the truth of the life he describes.

far beyond singing, see Essay XX, Hazlitt on Coleridge's talk.

haunting, pursuing you while you read them: spectral, truly bloodless, lifeless.

the English realists......the French. English realism has consisted mostly in describing the dull, monotonous life in dull streets of dull towns, in dull families,—dullness ending often in tragedy; dullness poisoning life. French realism dwells more on sensuality; sexual errors leading to tragedy; the impossibility of any man of any age or position avoiding them. On the hero of the English realistic novel Stevenson's remark is, 'Why doesn't the idiot run away, or drown himself in drink?' on the French, 'What in the world makes him do these actions?'

the personal poetry...: the romantic happiness of the person, his joy and wonder at the moment, is never depicted: such writers take care to omit these things.

PAGE 151. **each,** the French as well as the English type of realism

no man lives......among salts and acids; the scientific analysis of things is not the life of things, nor does mere analysis reach the true core of man's life.

ugliness......temptation: if evil were merely ugly and repulsive who would ever commit it? Humanity is not so shameless as to do disgusting things for the mere love of dirtiness: such a description goes against what we know of the decency of humanity ('the modesty of life.')

melodrama, drama in which the hero is all perfect and the villain all base, the heroine divinely beautiful, and every event either sugar-sweet or poison-sad; in fact, sensations strung together only to move the senses, not to represent life to the intelligence. Tolstoi (1828—1910)

deliberately moves the senses to disgust and horror, but the whole is untrue to reality. The Russian peasants, whose life is painted all squalor, probably enjoy themselves as truly as you or I.

Old Bailey drama: plays of crime, violence, death, and punishment, if unrelieved by any of the ordinary joy of life, become mere nonsense to sensible spectators.

Andre, in George Sand's novel: then we have references to George Meredith's Ordeal of Richard Feverel, to Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra and King Lear: and to Dostoieffsky, a Russian novelist (1821—81), many of whose works have been translated.

PAGE 152. **too much of lesser matters......open air.** Too much of these failings and mistakes of the realists: who cares about them, after all? Also they leave a bad taste, a poisonous atmosphere: turn to 'the open air'!

Itur in antiquam silvam, a tag from Virgil: 'we enter the ancient wood,' by which Stevenson may mean that he turns to classical authors for relief.

XXII.

AN APOLOGY FOR IDLERS.

(The opening quotation is from Boswell's Life of Johnson A parallel saying of Johnson's was:—'If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle.' Proceeding from defence to offence, Stevenson ends by vigorously attacking modern ideas and exalting his own philosophy.)

He begins by humorously apologising for being so, different from the rest of mankind, who must 'do a job' nowadays.

PAGE 153. **lese-respectability**: as lese-majeste, a French law term for 'treason,' means 'a sin against royalty,' so this is coined as a term for 'a sin against respectability.'

bravado and gasconade, bluff and boasting.

race for six-penny pieces, competition for a livelihood.

Alexander......Diogenes. The philosopher (who lived in a tub) showed plainly that he valued the great general at nothing. So did the Roman Senate treat the Gauls with disdain. The Gauls under Brennus took and sacked Rome in 390 B. C., and the Senators received them in dead silence, sitting in their robes in their places in the Senate House. The wound given to one's self-conceit rankles.

PAGE 154. Paragraph 2 continues the defence of himself for daring to defend idleness. **The subject**=the defence of idleness as against industry.

prison......Conventry. 'To speak on this subject is no against the law, but it is enough to get you thrown out of society: the industrious people are the majority, and can boycott you.'

escape from school-honours with all his wits......The boys who live less, and read more, get the prizes and the honours at school, but have less practical sense and do not show so well in the world. He humorously exaggerates this: 'school honours actually take away the lad's wits.'

shot in their locker: the round shot for cannon on board ship was kept in lockers from which it could be easily rolled out. The rest of the paragraph repeats that it is better to do some of your living in youth; and keep some of your reading for age and spectacles, when you are less able to live actively.

PAGE 155. **Emphyteusis Stillicide**: 'they sound like it, but are not,' being terms in law. [-cide, in particular, means killing in suicide, matricide: but in this case it only means dropping (water].

that mighty place of education; humorously for 'the street.' Dickens and Balzac drew upon 'the street' for their characters. Balzac was a French novelist (1799—1858), a favourite with Stevenson.

inglorious, because they fail in worldly life.

PAGE 156 **Mr. Worldly Wiseman**: name of a character in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

scholastic categories: like dogmatic formularies in the first paragraph. The idea is that a thing is not a thing if it is not one of the things that the learned recognise. The world, like the 'schoolmen' (followers of Aristotle in the Middle Ages, say 1400—1600 roughly), has fixed a certain number of kinds of things that exist: (in this case, occupations, or lines of research or knowledge): and if you say any others exist, you are to be burned at the stake.

PAGE 157. **Sainte-Beuve**, French critic and essayist (1801—1869).

with a smile on his face all the time: to indicate that while we are observing men and life, it should be with a good-natured will to see good in all.

PAGE 158. **underbred**, under-educated in knowledge and manners.

Book. of experience, as regarded by Sainte-Beuve (above).

Hebrew roots : like the Arabic roots, a great feature in the acquiring of the language.

his wisdom : he proves it in the succeeding sentences. Knowing how others look to others, he knows how he himself will look to others.

ironical indulgence : he will not be mad, rapt, absorbed in a hobby, but if he ever has one, he will be self-critical and smile at himself indulging in it.

Commonplace Lane, etc. The naming fashion is in imitation of Bunyan.

Belvedere. Italian for beautiful view ; used of a pavilion, balcony, or vantage point of any kind where one is taken to see the view.

and while others behold....... The reader must work out the individual ideas for himself : but the point is that the observer will look to Eternity as a great vast plain in full daylight, and to Time and this world as a shadowy, dimly-lighted tract under the dawn.

PAGE 159. **shrill doctors** : loudly-disputing wiseacres. Plangent wars, echoing with the clash of arms and the cries (including the mourning cries) that go up to heaven. Note that the shadows are the learning of the wise and the quarrels of the ambitious over their conquests ; these are shadows and run off into Eternity, while quiet enjoyment of life remains as the only abiding reality 'under the dawn.' The common things of life are the world, and remain as much as any of it can remain : those things are speedily forgotten and do not recur.

extreme busyness, he refers to unnaturally deep absorption in work : plodding, unremitting labour.

catholic, universal, open to every kind of object.

a strong sense...... A constant awareness that I am I : a kind of perpetual assertion of character. There is deep truth in the remark.

random provocations, chance temptations (*i. e.*, to exploring, loitering, excursions, and so on.]

PAGE 160. **on the boxes** : *i. e.*, on the piles of luggage on the platform, as a very small child would.

PAGE 161. **Colonel Newcome**..... **Barnes**. These characters are in Thackeray's "The Newcomes."

Barabbases : Barabbas was a robber crucified with Christ : here he means people who, though solemn and reputed respectable, were cheats, robbers or churls to their fellows.

Northcote, a painter, who was very friendly with Hazlitt

like a compact with the devil : witches and sorcerers (who got their power by selling themselves to Satan) were popularly supposed to sign the agreement in their own blood.

Do you really fancy......importunity ? The idea is—why do you want it to be a difficult or an unpleasant thing for him to do ? Does it make it any more pleasant to you to receive a letter of 6 sheets, if you think that he hated writing the letter, cursed as he wrote it, flung the ink about and said 'Damn this fellow, he's always writing and I am forced to write in reply'? Ridiculous, of course.

PAGE 162. **Pleasures......blest.** The man liked writing to you : the writer liked writing the witty article which amused you : should you be the less grateful because he had pleasure in doing it ? On the contrary, what is done as a duty is forced, what is done as a pleasure is doubly valuable, because it is free.

generous people : contrasted with 'a churlish disposition' above.

both pleased and mystified : the boy simply did not know what the man was talking about. So it often happens : one does not know the benefit one is giving.

PAGE 163. **his services in the Circumlocution office** : this is only joking reference to Dickens' famous skit : he really means 'the world can dispense with his services in whatever God-forsaken office it is he works in—whatever is his drivelling, drudging task.' (The essayist has become far from apologetic in advocacy of idleness !)

'so careless of the single life,' from Tennyson's In Memoriam.

PAGE 164. Shakespeare was said to have been found out poaching, but the truth of this is doubted : see any Life of Shakespeare.

if you look the alternative all over : if you really consider from every point of view the advantages of the other thing (which he is about to mention : a pound of tobacco).

Atlas was just a gentleman with a protracted nightmare. Many of us behave as if we held the world on our shoulders, and it would come to an end if we lost our post! Altas, in Greek mythology, was a giant who held up the sky. All,

a vain dream ! he thought he did; but he wasn't required, and might have slept comfortably.

As though Pharaoh should set...pyramid. Stevenson flashes out for a moment against some journalist or other, of a petty nature. 'The fellow behaves as if some slave-driver had set him the enormous task—of writing this piffle ! As if Pharaoh should put his thousands of coolies to make, instead of a pyramid, a pin !' Next moment, he makes us laugh and is all good-humour again. The 'white plumes' follow ridiculously

decline, consumption, phthisis. **A hearse with white plumes** : this would mark the funeral of a child or young girl: possibly it might be done for a promising young man untimely cut off: or so Stevenson chooses to suppose.

lukewarm bullet, this Earth.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

Hilaire Belloc, born 1870; of French birth, educated at Oxford ; has read most things and travelled much ; knows Western Europe perhaps as well as anyone living : has dealt with an endless variety of subjects and written poetry, history, satire, propaganda, politics, strategy, literature and literary criticism. A Roman Catholic : sat in Parliament 1906–1910, lectured on English Literature 1911—13, and wrote War History from 1915 onwards. His books of essays include :—'On Something,' 'On Nothing,' 'On Everything', On This and That.'

XXIII

Our Inheritance.

Page 166. **we have really so muddled things** : economically, things are not what they should be, our people do not live under ideal conditions: but the 'we' cannot apply particularly to Englishmen, as it is the case everywhere.

titles to joy, merely 'things to rejoice in.'

Page 167. **not so much because......national.** The expression of the national spirit is a more important part of their interests and charm than any great poetic power, philosophic genius, etc., which they may exhibit.

Ludlow, etc. These places are in the Severn Valley.

inform, in the old Latin sense [informare] : to give shape and form to : to infuse interest into familiar spots in his own country side from their connection with historic personages or battles.

detestable......civilian ways: one has to realise what Mr. Belloc is thinking of : the first is the insolence of country, of national prejudice: the second the ignorant prejudiced criticism or partisanship of less enlightened civilians (because military men, being experts, could value truly the part played by each side at each moment in the action). These ideas are elaborated in the rest of the paragraph. Mr. Belloc's own keen studies of military affairs and of war must be borne in mind.

PAGE 168. **cover** : cover from fire being an all-important part in military tactics.

dirty cosmopolitan mud : 'undesirable aliens,' and the 'international crooks' who are found in all great capitals.

PAGE 169. **the printed truth is punishable at law** : he must refer to some libel action which succeeded (where he thinks it should not have. 'To avoid being liable to action for libel myself, I must keep quiet about Northwhich!' Northwhich, in Cheshire, is a self-mining town and not particularly pleasant. Perhaps he must not say he got bad food at an inn there.

PAGE 170. **'the crowd between'**—by the help of one with another; by all of them.

'Everyman' is the best-known of the ancient 'mystery-plays' : these are moral allegories in which the characters are Man, Virtue, Justice, etc., and they were in England the earliest and rudest form of drama. 'Good-deeds' in 'Everyman' comes to his help: she represents his own good deeds.

Ronsard, one of the first figures in French literature, 1524—1585 : famous for love-poems and descriptions of Nature.

XXIV

ON A SOUTHERN HARBOUR

PAGE 173. **jetties**. To realise exactly what the writer is thinking of is difficult without having seen the coast : but probably jetties refers either to steamer piers at villages along the coast, or else to small wooden or stone jetties

used by fishermen, these being seen only at a very near approach to the shore : in any case distinct from the harbour or quay (which he calls pier below) at which the ship came in.

round the pier: pier is used for the stone quay forming a horn of the harbour enclosure.

the light wind took us......forward. The wind, light now and changeable, veered round as they approached close to land : first it changed through 90° and came on the side (abeam) and then through 90° more and came to meet them (forward).

PAGE 174. **let go**, sc. 'the helm.' **Swung up,** came direct into the wind, the path of least resistance for the sails, so that they hung idle: the natural consequence of 'letting go.'

PAGE 175. **re-conquest**, referring to the expulsion of the Moors first from Spain, then from the islands : in the 15th century.

PAGE 176. **masqued**; masked, set so as to hide all expression, stolid.

to name a shrine......I said, "Would you like me to make a gift to some particular church or place of pilgrimage ?"—*i. e.*, at some other place on my further journey, as I had no money and was just leaving the island.

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

Augustine Birrell, born 1850 : a famous speapker, wit and essayist, politician and biographer : educated at Cambridge, called to the Bar, became a Professor of Law sat in Parliament and held important appointments. 'Obiter Dicta' ['Remarks in Passing'], in two volumes, are his best-known collection of essays.

XXV

THE HABIT OF READING.

PAGE 177. **aphorist**, a maker of aphorisms. By its (Greek) derivation aphorism means a distinction laid down, or a definition disposed of in brief terms. Used for a short and pithy saying. An epigram only differs from it in having something arresting in it of wit, quaintness, or unexpectedness. The present instance is rather an epigram than an aphorism, for it is a paradox; who would expect

to hear all habits condemned as bad? **Paradox**-contrary to received opinion.)

magnum, a large measure; chiefly applied to wine bottles.

cleanse his way; the Bible, Psalm 119, 9: 'wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?'

PAGE 178. **verst**, versed.

Lord Foppington, a 'fop,' as his name suggests, in The Relapse 1696 by Sir John Vanbrugh (1664—1726).

PAGE 179. **The Three Musketeers**, by Alexander Dumas the elder (1802—1870) one of the most famous of French novelists

War and Peace. perhaps the chief work of Count Leo Tolstoi: it is a novel of the middle of last century.

The run. To 'have the run' of anything is to be allowed to use it, to be given access to it and to the whole of it at all times.

Walpole, Horace Walpole's Letters. He lived 1717—1797.

Gibbon. Edward Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. (1776.) He lived 1737—1794.

He cannot be read in less: any shorter edition (in fewer volumes) would be unreadable.

PAGE 180. **Fielding**, Henry (1707—1754), and **Richardson** (1689—1761), two of the early English novelists.

Sterne, Revd. Laurence (1713--1768) author of **Tristram Shandy** and **A Sentimental Journey**.

the terrace at Berne in Switzerland: a platform from which a general view of the northern or Bernese Alps is obtained.

home for heroes: an echo of an after-war tag: appeals were made to the public to get funds to prevent those who had served in the war from finding themselves homeless. 'Homes for Heroes!' a high-sounding cry, contrasts with the tiny cottages or cramped quarters which 'heroes' actually got. The writer means to refer humorously to his modest house.

crust; with age one gets 'crusty,' acquires a crust: because one becomes too stiff and tough to bend, *i.e.*, to form new habits, or to get rid of old ones.

Mr. Gladstone: William Ewart Gladstone, the great Liberal leader of the 19th century, was a strong English Churchman (1809—1898).

PAGE 181. **to come into** *i. e.*, at birth.

PAGE 182. **Soho**, also referred to in a previous essay a quarter of central London where there are many cheap and good restaurants, also many foreigners.

Phineas Finn: one of Anthony Trollope's many novels.

Clarendon's. Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1609—1674): on the Civil War.

Dumas and **Balzac** (1799—1858) have been referred to before: Anatole France is a more recent French novelist and satirist, only lately deceased (1926).

ennui. French for 'boredom,' weariness.

in your own line, of reading: of a kind, or on a subject, which you had been particularly interested in.

PAGE 183. **R A.** Member of the Royal Academy [of Painters]

Wilkes. John Wilkes, hero of a famous trial, 1776: he was impeached in the House of Commons for a libel in his newspaper.

'invulnerable' He was not easily stung or roused: it was difficult to 'draw' him or poke fun at him.

sitters, those who 'sat' to him for their portraits: the regular term.

like Eton boys, "to grow heavy." Sleepy, easily bored: or no longer interested.

PAGE 184. **Matthew Arnold,** (1822—1888), poet, critic, and essayist, best known for his poems.

A. G. GARDINER.

A. G. Gardiner, born 1865; wrote under the pen name 'Alpha of the Plough' a number of articles for a London newspaper, The Star, and edited another newspaper, the Daily News, for many years.

XXVI

ON BORES.

[From 'Windfalls.']

PAGE 185. **It is only absence..** 'Absence makes the heart grow fonder,' a much-quoted line from the song-writer Thomas Haynes Bayly (1797—1839)

PAGE 186. **And then he taketh a chair:** to continue the opinion he is giving, and to bore you with a very long talk. The imitation of archaic style is a comic device that has perhaps been made too cheap: but our author is careful not to continue it too long.

the bore courageous. This trick of the adjective after the noun carried a hint of the French idiom, as made famous in the jesting of Touchstone: Shakespeare, As you Like It, act v. Sc. i :—'the retort courteous......the quip modest......the reproof valiant......the lie direct.'

the glad eye, modern slang for 'a pleased look'. Note that it is slang, though so natural that in 20 years no one will be aware of it.

of the most select...... This fellow has no modesty either : he will have no hesitation in forcing himself into the best company, passing by groups of lesser people.

The cautious bore **proceeds by sap and mine.** Typical of a slower and more careful carrying of the siege : a sap is a trench or tunnel aiming at the wall, ending in the mine to blow it up : hence 'Sappers and Miners.'

PAGE 187. **Perchance......**(he thinks to himself).

Incontinently, a little ambiguous, as it has two interpretations. In long-established usage, incontinently, or oftener incontinent as an adverb, means 'without waiting,' 'straight off' : but here the writer must, I think, have meant 'because he cannot contain it,' 'willy-nilly,' or 'laxly,' 'uncontrolledly.'

noticeably unseen : it is obvious that they are unaware of him.

that made them remember things : the humour is wittily concealed : the 'things we remember,' when bores arrive, are 'other engagements'.

calling, avocation, place in society.

PAGE 188. '**bowels of compassion**' : a phrase due to the translators of the Bible in 1611 ; Epistle of John I. 3, 17. The Greek word means 'bowels' : 'of compassion' was added in explanation.

mpereth........'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb' is a proverb in English (also very nearly identical in French) : Sterne uses it in his. Sentimental Journey, perhaps freely translating.

humour : this is the sense that the Bore lacks.

authentic emanation of personality : it must flow of itself from the sociability of the person : be given off as a substance gives off vapour.

Melbourne : Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister and counsellor of Queen Victoria at the opening of her reign'.

Coleridge: this judgment may not be altogether inconsistent with the saying of Hazlitt, that Coleridge 'talked above singing.'

Necker's daughter: Madame de Staël, a clever and witty Frenchwoman of the late 18th and early 19th century. He died 13 years before she published 'Corinne'.

E. V. LUCAS.

Edward Verrall Lucas, born 1868; educated in London: best known as a humorous, whimsical writer, a frequent contributor to 'Punch': but a serious litterateur who has never sacrificed good style. Edited the essays and wrote a life of Charles Lamb, and has edited selections of prose and poetry and written novels and essays. His essay is more of the sketch than the essay, and the manner is rather more than the matter: he does not pretend to write deliberately on great subjects.

XXVII.

"My Cousin, The Bookbinder."

[From Character and Comedy].

Page 190. [In the heading] **'waked it'**: the '*it*' is part of the phrase, as in 'foot it,' 'keep it up': the all-night wake or feast is an Irish custom: Lamb means 'I revelled late,' 'was at a late party.'

"So you've been reading that, Sir." Elia's Essays—the collected volume. We are supposed to be hearing what Lamb's own cousin thought of him: he is supposed to be talking to a customer in his shop, date about 1825, as 'about fifty' below shows.

Thomas Gray, 1716—1761, famous for his Elegy written in a Country Churchyard, long his popular work; but his Odes are now preferred to it.

Rasselas, Dr. Samuel Johnson's novel.

Page 191. **his father, a little brisk man**......For this account, compare Lamb's own sketch of Salt's general 'factotum.'

Page 192. **It is too sad**......This refers to the terrible tragedy of Mary's going mad and murdering her father.

'A word unsaid is still to say': a proverb. There's no

harm in holding back from uttering what it was in your mind to say. (It sounds like Scotch caution. I cannot find the proverb recorded, but parallel sayings are not uncommon. 'It'll keep'—in regard to news or secrets—is akin.)

PAGE 195. **the Lane, when Elliston had it.** Drury Lane Theatre, when Elliston was manager.

PAGE 196. **Mr. Dyer**: Lamb's friend D.—of Essay No. XVIII, Oxford in the Vacation.

to serve up, like a dish for the enjoyment of others: in a literary sense, to turn the incident into an article.

PAGE 197. **'He gets back pretty soon'**: the statement does not agree with Lamb's own account, which gives what is from our point of view an extraordinarily late hour—eight—and sometimes ten.

the brass, the 'cheek,' impudence.

old Munden; he was an actor of whom Charles Lamb too was very fond.

ROBERT LYND.

Robert Lynd, born 1879; a very modern writer dealing much with the life about him, but in true essayist style. Among his collected books of essays and sketches are 'The Pleasures of Ignorance' and 'The Peal of Bells.'

XXVIII

ON BEING RATHER ILL

[From The Blue Lion.]

PAGE 200. **M. Coue.** Monsieur Coue, who died recently (1925), created quite a sensation in the Western world by his method of employing the mind to act on the body, especially in the cases of nervous invalids. He conducted a clinic himself and effected cures; but what he wrote on the subject had a wider influence. The popular summary of his method is contained in the formula (to be repeated often daily) "Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better." This only does him very rough justice; but the idea is that the mind of a nervous or morbid-minded patient must be directed to hopefulness, and not allowed to wallow in the despondenc of being a conscious invalid.

bedside manner: a doctor is said to have 'a good bedside manner,' if he cheers his patients by his visits.

All men are mortal: old Fudge was a man; therefore old Fudge was mortal An exact syllogism, after the 'schoolmen'; humorously dragged in.

PAGE 201. **I was to be......** As if his visit was not enough, I was fated to be discouraged again.

to Ascot: to the famous racecourse, in Berkshire, for the races.

a conscientious objector: one who escaped enrolment in the Army [in war-time, particularly] because he declared on oath that his religious convictions forbade him to fight.

PAGE 202. **Naaman the leper**: Naaman 'the Syrian,' already referred to in Note ('the waters of Damascus') on Essay xvii, p. 290. The point here is not that he prefers other waters, but—what is the deeper meaning of the story—that he, like Naaman, expected from the specialist exactly what he came to him to get. Naaman went to the prophet for a miracle, not for a prescription to bathe: and the writer went to doctors to get bottles, not advice about taking simple exercise.

PAGE 203. **blancmange**, French, but long ago made English; a rather tasteless white pudding: boiled cod, too, is rather tasteless white fish.

PAGE 204. **Fletcher**, a man (American I think) who; advocated chewing everything forty times before swallowing it: and gave rise to the verb 'to fletcherise' one's food.

PAGE 205. **Carlsbad**, a resort in South Germany, famous for its waters.

medicine-man; in the African sense, as used by savage races. Medicine there includes magic and every art above the level of the deepest ignorance, and the medicine-man is generously rather a horrible magician. The doctor should give his magic bottle and be done with it. The great point is that the simple layman puts faith in a bottle as the savage would in a charm.

But let him not deceive himself...... The fact that prefer medicine is to remain a secret: don't tell the doctor I and don't let him think he is giving me something easy to do, or perhaps he will set me something harder. "Yes, medicine is horrible—horrible. I, poor wretch, have to suffer terribly at these doctors' hands; doses, doses, doses." [I must be sorry for myself.]

G. K. CHESTERTON.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, born 1874: educated in London: studied art and wrote art criticism. A large and by no means thin man, he is a well-known figure in London and is often caricatured: he is supposed, not quite truly, to gain notoriety by contradicting everything that people commonly accept. A Roman Catholic, and in the advocacy of religious or other causes, a zealot with a hammering style Is fond of epigrams and of paradoxes; has written essays and various other books, among them critical studies of Dickens and Browning A popular writer for the newspapers. 'Tremendous Trifles' and 'All Things Considered' are among his books of essays. (The essay here is from the latter.)

XXIX

ON RUNNING AFTER ONE'S HAT.

PAGE 206. Paragraph I expresses envy, angry disappointment, at not having been among the lucky people to see part of London under a flood: 'islands are romantic, and while I have been away Battersea has been simply a sea of islands.'

The **gondola,** the boat of Venice, is famous.

Paragraph 2 discusses: is it practical to say one loves to see a flood or a fire?

"Indignant Ratepayer" is common as a signature at the foot of 'letters to the Editor' complaining of 'municipal mismanagement.'

PAGE 207. "**They also serve who only stand and wait**" is the last line of Milton's famous sonnet on his blindness. It has been often parodied and treated comically—Chesterton does it most flippantly by adding—"for the 2. 15."

fixed and mystical: moods of contemplation, when I have been rapt, absorbed in thought, rooted to the spot.

PAGE 208. **to run after one's hat**: one has a vision of a gusty wind, a wet and muddy street, and a gentleman in faultless dress diving between motor-cars, omnibuses and carts in pursuit of a top-hat.

the professional attendants: the huntsmen: thicket, covert: we have here a parody on fox-hunting. Hat-hunting will have its own technical terms.

humanitarianism: the advocacy by humane people of the abolition of all unnecessary cruelty: especially in sports, such as hunting and shooting.

rich, almost riotous; rich, when they smiled: riotous, when they began to shout with laughter and roll about with it, revelling in the sport of seeing hats chased.

PAGE 209. **anglers**, who sit for hours catching nothing, have surely a much worse time: let him be thankful instead of growing and swearing.

theological terms to which they attached no doctrinal significance: the word 'damn!'

that rhymes to jammed; 'damned.'

sense of wrong: the feeling of injury, of resentment against the drawer, or against the perversity of things.

subjective and relative; not absolute or existing by itself. Only existing from his point of view (the subject, the person acting, thinking and feeling): only related to the immediate circumstances of the moment, namely his desire to get this thing done and get on with something else.

'By changing the circumstances and the object in view, you change the relative complexion of the trouble; imagine so-and-so and so-and-so.'

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

John Galsworthy, born 1867: educated at Harrow School and Oxford: called to the Bar. A writer of plays, novels, and essays, of which perhaps the ambitious novel—several novels in series—called 'the Forsyte Saga'—is the best-known: but he has been a popular novelist and playwright for a good many years.

XXX

A PORTRAIT

[The old gentleman he here describes also appears as one of the characters in The Forsyte Saga, his big novel.]

PAGE 212. **anæmia**, in the literal sense an unhealthy condition of the body, bloodlessness or poverty of blood;

but here figuratively, anæmic character, without force or decision: flabbiness.

PAGE 213. **robustious**, a word of late coinage, almost slang: it adds somewhat to robust; robust and bustling, almost blustering (if used of talk) or violent (if used of action.)

complacencies, 'self-satisfied' arguments or remarks. **articled**, apprenticed.

PAGE. 214. **Pickwick.** The Old Gentleman's youth was from 1830—1840 or a little later, and Dickens' Pickwick represents roughly 1820. Meals, especially country ones were feasts, and great joviality and perhaps gluttony the rule. Mr. Wardle in Pickwick gives a good idea of a hospitable country squire.

French windows open down to the ground like doors, and indeed act as both.

PAGE 215. **mushrooms wild and tame**: to the supply growing naturally in his paddock he added an artificially cultivated supply: they can be grown indoors in (say) a stable, in moisture and no sun.

such a quarter, such a place or spot: guard against the error of taking quarter as the singular of quarters—a sense in which it is unknown in England.

nectarines, a fruit between a peach and a plum.

Alderney, one of the Channel Islands, gives its name to a famous breed of cows. Jersey and Guernsey also do, Jersey being the most famous.)

grand opera, when the first actor-singers in the world are employed: it has been found too expensive in England, for many years past, to pay.

Beethoven, like Mozart, a great composer for the piano and stringed instruments, less known for opera: Gluck and Meyerbeer, more known for their operas.

Herbert Spencer: great social philosopher, or philosopher and sociologist 1820—1903.

Wagner. Richard Wagner led a new movement in music, trying to make more definite what music represented: he also caused a controversy of opinion, but is now almost unanimously placed in the forefront of composers of operas. Bayreuth in Bavaria is the place where he had his own theatre, and for many years insisted on the performance of his operas there and nowhere else.

PAGE 216. **between this person and Mozart.** 'Person' might be placed in inverted commas: it is slightly derogatory; the old man could not forgive this new composer for raising such a stir with his ideas. As for any comparison between him and Mozart, it is difficult to make. The old gentleman could not grasp the new merit in Wagner.

Hogarth: see Note on Essay xix, p. 295.

Rubens and **Vandyke** were Flemish painters; the latter painted a good deal in England, and his portrait of Charles I is famous. **Rembrandt,** a Dutch painter famous for his colouring, especially his sombre interiors. J. M. W. Turner, contemporary with the 1Od Gentleman, put so much yellow light into most of his pictures that he at first surprised and even shocked those who were conservatively inclined: it was this which our friend thought 'extravagant,' *i. e*, exaggerated. Botticelli and the early Italians 14th and early 15th centuries, approached nearer to, or diverge less from, the Indian style of painting than subsequent painters. **Impressionism**: the name given to a school of painting which singles out the telling features of a subject and emphasises these with bold strokes, to the disregard of details: it was a revolt against 'pre-Raphaelitism,' an exactly opposite movement which insisted on details and the symbolism of each detail. James Whistler, also a contemporary painter, could combine impressionism with delicacy of detail and took a leading place by his personality as well as his art.

PAGE 217. **the Three Towns**, in Cornwall: Penzance Truro and St. Ives.

Turgenev, Turgeniev, Turgenieff as variously rendered): a modern Russian novelist.

Dickens, Thackeray, Sir Walter Scott, etc. This paragraph continues the account of his taste in novels.

PAGE 218. Anthony Trollope (1815—1882) Frederick Marryat 1792-1848 R. D. Blackmore (1·25—1900), chiefly famous for Lorna Doone; Thomas Hardy (b. 1840), novelists. The last-named has a great reputation. Samuel Clemens ('Mark Twain' American humourist and novelist, (1835—1910) is perhaps best known and loved for Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. George Meredith (1828—1909) poet and novelists, a remarkable man of letters, but perhaps a little diffiulct hence the Old Gentleman's criticism.

Celebrities of the stage are next mentioned.

Sir Henry Irving had a reputation in his time second to none of the 'classics'; but the verdict of his time is being upset. He was artificial; but could move audiences, and had his great moments, *e.g*, in 'The Bells'; the Old Gentleman's pronouncement would satisfy most moderns.

PAGE 219. **side-spring boots,** with elastic pieces in the sides, and so easier to take off.

a Conservative Liberal.....a Liberal Conservative. An epigrammatic summary of his political change. The words hardly require elucidation: but only the last word in each phrase ought to have a capital letter. Benjamin Disraeli ('Dizzy'). Lord Beaconsfield (a 'liberal Conservative') and William Ewart Gladstone, the great leader of the Liberal Party through most of the second half of the 19th century, occupied the stage of politics for many years.

rivals, Gladstone: the 'extravagance' was exaggerated humanitarianism and sentimentalism.

Lord Hartington (born 1833), afterwards Duke of Devonshire, a liberal conservative, and the originator of the 'Liberal unionist' party: Lord Salisbury, several times Conservative Prime Minister, and the exact representative of the bulk of English Conservatism. John Bright, a Liberal and humanitarian orator, whose speeches were rather galling to any but a Liberal or a Socialist; too 'Radical' for our friend but respected by him rightly for his sincerity.

Palmerston; Lord Palmerston preceded Disraeli, and took a very decided, sometimes high-handed line in foreign relations: hence the saying that he used to 'astonish their weak nerves'; 'they' being the foreign statesmen in general. The Old Gentleman's reverence for him was doubtless partly due to his being back in "the fifties,' the 'good old days' of his recollection.

PAGE 221. **"religion"......vital to him.** The religion of the time was traditional, the foundations of belief had not been greatly questioned: towards the end of the century all had become sceptics who corresponded in education and position with the 'Old Gentleman.' This scepticism was not irreligious; "religion" went by the board, but piety remained deep-seated, and new beliefs had to be formulated. It is not irreligious, when you cannot any longer believe certain things, to renounce them frankly.

the mechanism......That is, he went through the forms of it and used the words and ideas of it: he had never gone through the trial of self-examination as to whether he could genuinely hold these things true and real.

in essence pagan: the joy of living was enough to satisfy his soul against all doubts. **All was right**......These words recall Browning—'God's in his Heaven: all's right with the world'—and Fitzgerald's rendering of Omar Khayyam: the pots say of The Potter: 'Pish! He's a good fellow, and 'twill all be well."

PAGE 222. **without real faith.** The time that produced him was the time before even sceptism became common: an age of faith, but not of reasoned faith. Then he was an Individualist, thinking for himself shrewdly in most matters: but not in religion. An individualist religion, such as is that of most Englishmen who have worked it out for themselves, he had not achieved: he had left such things alone, with a vague trust in Providence or the Nature of Things.

But "the poor," in bulk......He did not, for example, relieve beggars, or poverty-stricken people generally: though always kind where a case in any way concerned himself. 'If they are poor, let them go to the poor-house': 'if they are unable to obey the laws, let them go to the prison': he believed it only right to insist on these as general guides to conduct. Men should suffer for their own faults.

PAGE 223. **one's own class.** This is, indeed, the truest explanation of his rules of life. He held to his own class and bothered little about other classes.

naivete; French for 'simplicity' It expresses more than that: an unconsciousness (of anything wrong, or of what he is doing) that is quite humorous to the looker-on who understands: a childish innocence, real rather than assumed.

Dourness. Dour [pronounced dur] is a scotch word meaning stern and stubborn.

'**junket,**' curds and cream: 'toad-in-the-hole,' a dish of stewed meat, etc.

PAGE 224. **awkward General Meeting**: at which opposition from a body of the shareholders was to be expected:

requiring skill to maintain and defend the directors' position and actions.

of his calibre, (lit. 'size':) of the same greatness of mind.

PAGE 226. **rococo**, devoid of style, or mixing various styles. Commonly used of art, a especially of architecture : here humorously transferred to a game.

Those who passed from cricket with him......Those who played, as children, with him, and then went to a public school (or preparatory school) where cricket was properly aught.

PAGE 227. **identification,** sc., of himself : self-identification.

diagnoses, plural of diagnosis.

To the declining benison......**Declining**, towards the end: referring to the cadence of the voice, as the speaker nears the close : prayers for near and dear ones and then for those outside coming at the end. (A child's voice falls especially, as the child is generally in a hurry to get it finished!)

PAGE. 228. **so roundabout**......They would prepare for the business with such solemn care, kneeling and getting into the right attitude slowly and unhurriedly.

a sketch of the 'desperate character.' This friend was regarded as loving something risky and venturesome on occasions; actually somewhat 'sporting,' as we should say he was hailed as a 'desperate fellow' by our Old Gentleman.

the advertising fashion......'Everything,' he says : but the reference is mainly to politics : the canvassing of the parties, the praising-up of their own deeds, the self-advertising, notoriety-hunting speeches in public.

PAGE 229. **Grisi**, etc., famous singers : Grisi (1811—69) was in her zenith from 1840 to 1860. Jenny Lind who lived from 1820—1887 was held to be the possessor of the finest female voice ever heard.

through those forms......**of his own** : while the regular ritual of the burial service was being pronounced, his gaze was fixed as if on something which he was beyond, some

vision of the meaning of death and what comes after. His conclusion, or the belief at which he had arrived, was not something expressed by those words of the clergyman.

of Balance : the secret of a completely sane, well-balanced life.